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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN OWEN, D.D.

EDITED

BY THOMAS RUSSELL, M.A.

WITH

MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,

BY WILLIAM ORME.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF DR. OWEN;
AN APPENDIX CONSISTING OF LETTERS, NOTES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS;
CLARKSON'S FUNERAL SERMON, AND INDEXES.

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1826.

TO

JOHN BROADLEY WILSON, Esq.

WHO

HATH GOOD REPORT OF ALL MEN,

FOR

DEVOTED ATTACHMENT TO THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL;

ENLIGHTENED REGARD TO THE DICTATES OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT;

EXEMPLARY AND UNWEARIED BENEVOLENCE;

AND ARDENT ZEAL FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE DIVINE GLORY,

AND THE BEST INTERESTS OF MANKIND:

THIS EDITION

OF THE

WORKS OF DR. OWEN,

IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE AND OBLIGED FRIEND,

THE EDITOR.

Walworth, March 20, 1826.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In the present collection of Dr. Owen's Works, the only one approaching to completeness hitherto published, the Theologumena has been omitted, in deference to the wishes of many of the Subscribers; and the Exercitations on a Day of Sacred Rest, on account of its being inserted in Dr. Wright's Edition of the Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The classification of the Works is not precisely that which the Editor would have preferred. As it had been determined, independently of him, to commence with the Discourse on the Holy Spirit, it remained for him to follow up his arrangement on this basis. Accordingly, the first series of subjects will be found connected with this Treatise, including the Dissertations on the Scriptures, to the end of the fourth volume. The next eight volumes are principally Doctrinal and Controversial; and the two following, Devotional and Practical. The fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth, contain Sermons, and commence the Polemical pieces on Popery, which end with the eighteenth volume; while the three last are occupied chiefly with Church Government, and Miscellaneous Tracts.

The Editor has in his possession several manuscripts of Dr. Owen, from which an octavo volume of some interest might be selected, should it appear desirable to add another to those already printed.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

JOHN OWEN, D. D.

PREFACE.

The following Memoirs embrace the personal history, the theological writings, and the religious connexions of Dr. John Owen. In common with many others, I had long entertained the highest respect for the works of this eminent person; and in the perusal of them, had spent some of the happiest and most profitable hours of my life. The pleasure derived from his writings led me, a few years ago, merely for my own satisfaction, to make some inquiry respecting their author. Not finding a satisfactory account, it occurred to me, that a careful examination of his numerous works, and of the contemporaneous productions of his age, might enable me to obtain a fuller and more correct view of him, than had yet been given. Thus originated the present volume.

Of the success which has attended my investigations, it does not become me to speak, as every reader will now form his own opinion; but I may be allowed to state, that neither personal labour nor expense has been spared, to procure information; and, that had I been aware, at an early period, of all the difficulties which have been experienced in prosecuting the task, it is more than probable it would never have been undertaken. I am very far, however, from regretting the labour in which I have been engaged. Whatever may be its effects on others, the benefit which I have derived from it myself, is ample compensation for all the trouble it has cost me.

Of the sources of information to which I have been chiefly indebted, it is not necessary to say any thing, as they are in general carefully marked. And I have the satisfaction to assure the reader, that every fact and cir-

cumstance in the personal life of Owen, which it was possible to procure and authenticate, has been fully and faithfully given.

To the works of Dr. Owen much attention has been paid. The difficulty of even obtaining a complete collection of them, may be estimated from a remark made by the author himself, 'That some of them he had not seen for nearly twenty years.' That difficulty is now happily removed. As many of them were answers to the books of others, and were replied to, often by more than one opponent, a vast number of works had to be procured, and examined, which are now almost entirely unknown. A minute account of all of these will not be expected within the limits of a volume. It would have been much easier, indeed, to have extended the criticism, than it was to confine it within the bounds which it occupies; but it is hoped such an account is in general given, as will gratify the curiosity, and in some measure inform the judgment of the reader. Quotations are seldom made, except when they contain information respecting the life, or are necessary to illustrate the opinions of the author.

While I have been careful to state what the real sentiments of Owen were, and to rescue them when necessary, from misrepresentation; I have not deemed it essential to the faithful discharge of my duty, as his Biographer, indiscriminately to adopt, or defend them. Any difference which exists, however, will be found of very small importance; and more generally to respect Owen's *manner* of stating his sentiments, than the sentiments themselves. What the Doctor avowed, the writer of his life need not be ashamed to profess:—

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri.

In noticing the religious connexions of Owen, and the state of parties during his time, I have studied to

speak the truth, and to avoid giving unnecessary offence. To exemption from partiality for the body with which Owen was chiefly connected, I am not anxious to lay claim; but I trust this has never led me to defend its faults, or to misrepresent its enemies. Convinced that truth is the only thing of importance to myself or others, I have used my best endeavours to discover it, and when discovered, I have fairly told it. It is probable, however, that some mistakes may be detected in the narrative; but these, it is hoped, will not affect any point of moment.

To several valuable literary friends, both in Scotland and in England, I have been under various and important obligations; by which the work has been rendered more complete, than it would otherwise have been. To Dr. Charles Stuart of Dunearn, and Joshua Wilson, Esq. of London, I have been in particular much indebted, for the use of many books and tracts, which I might in vain have sought for many years. For these and other attentions, they will be pleased to accept of my grateful acknowledgments.

The second edition, which is now prefixed to the first uniform collection of Owen's Works, has, I trust, experienced some improvement. It will serve in some measure for a key to the numerous writings of Owen, as in the account of them a reference is always given to the volume in which they are now to be found. Writers of various descriptions have thought proper to notice my first edition. Some of these have written in a spirit, which only shews how much they had been provoked, and that it is easier to abuse than to answer. Others, among whom are the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, in his life of Jeremy Taylor, and Mr. Todd, in his life of Bishop Walton, though they have differed from me, have treated me with great civility. To have defended every point which has been attacked, would have converted

my work into a magazine of controversy. To have answered some and neglected others would have afforded occasion to accuse me of disingenuousness or conscious weakness. I have, therefore, avoided all reference to those who have honoured me with their animadversions. I have altered or omitted whatever seemed to require correction; and regardless of party and personal malevolence, from both which I have suffered, I unhesitatingly republish what I consider to be supported by testimony or established by argument.

Part of the Appendix to the former edition, which was not essentially necessary to the illustration of the Memoirs, has been omitted in this to make room for other matter of more general interest. If a few passages in the text, chiefly extracts, have been left out, others have been added in their room, so that the work, though printed in a smaller number of pages, has undergone no abridgment. It is highly gratifying to me thus permanently to connect my imperfect labours with those of a man whose name is destined to live while the English language is spoken, and while Christianity prevails in Britain.

'And now,' to adopt the words of Isaac Walton,* 'I am glad that I have collected these Memoirs, which lay scattered, and contracted them into a narrower compass; and if I have, by the pleasant toil of doing so, either pleased or profited any man, I have attained what I designed when I first undertook it. But I seriously wish, both for the reader's and Dr. Owen's sake, that posterity had known his great learning and virtue by a better pen; by such a pen, as could have made his life as immortal, as his learning and merits ought to be.'

London, Camberwell,
March 22, 1826.

* Preface to the Life of Bishop Sanderson.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST

OF THE

WORKS OF DR. OWEN,

WITH REFERENCES TO THE PAGES OF HIS MEMOIRS IN WHICH AN ACCOUNT IS GIVEN OF THEM, AND THE VOLUME AND PAGE OF THE WORKS IN WHICH THEY OCCUR.

		Memoirs. Page.	*Works.* Vol. Page.
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MEMOIRS OF DR. OWEN.

CHAP. I.

Introduction—Family of Owen—State of the Puritans—Owen's Education —State of Oxford—Owen's religious Convictions—Leaves the University —Takes part with the Parliament—The Civil War—Owen's Conversion —Publishes his Display—Progress of Arminianism—Presentation to the living of Fordham—Marries his first Wife.

THE seventeenth century was the age of illustrious events and illustrious men in Britain. The civil and religious commotions which took place during that eventful period, the causes in which they originated, and the effects with which they were followed, deserve the attention of every British Christian, and are powerfully calculated to excite his religious and patriotic feelings. While he will often have occasion to drop the tear of pity over his bleeding country, he will frequently be called to adore the wondrous operations of that glorious Being, 'who rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm;' who piloted the vessel which contained our religion and liberties through the tempest which then threatened its destruction, and finally secured its safety and repose.

In every rank and profession there were then many distinguished individuals, whose independence of mind in the cause of their country, whose laborious researches in various departments of literature, or whose important discoveries in science and philosophy, conferred honours on themselves and on the land of their birth, of which they can never be deprived. The names of Pym, Hampden, Sidney, and Russel, will live while the fabric of the British Constitution continues to be loved and respected; those of Locke and Boyle, of Wallis and Newton, can perish only with the records of science and time. A Churchman cannot think of Hooker, Taylor, Chillingworth, and Barrow, but with emotions of the profoundest delight and veneration: and, while the cause of Non-conformity continues to be dear to those whose ancestors defended and suffered for

it, the page which records the virtues of Baxter and Bates, Howe and Owen, will always secure attention and respect.

To Statesmen may be left the commemoration of those who then shone in the cabinet, or distinguished themselves in the field. To Churchmen properly belongs the task of recording the learning, piety, and sufferings of their brethren. On a Dissenter naturally devolves the task of preserving the memory of his forefathers. Should he be indifferent to their reputation and their wrongs, who can be expected to assert them? and if he be zealous in their cause, and anxious to vindicate their honour, the motive is creditable to his feelings, whatever be the degree of success which may attend his attempt.

It is rather surprising that, while the minutest researches have been made into the lives of many obscure individuals, no separate work should have been devoted to the life of John Owen. Mr. Clarkson, who preached his funeral sermon, observed, 'that the account which is due to the world of this eminent man deserved a volume,' which he hoped would soon make its appearance. Cotton Mather, in that singular work 'Magnalia Americana Christi,' published twenty years afterwards, declared, 'that the church of God was wronged in that the life of the great John Owen was not written.' About twenty years after that, appeared, prefixed to the folio edition of his Sermons and Tracts, 'Memoirs of the Life of John Owen, D.D.' but which, though they appear to have been drawn up by Mr. Asty, a respectable Independent Minister in London, with the assistance of Sir John Hartopp, who was many years a member of the church of which Owen was pastor, and his particular friend, are both inaccurate and imperfect, and do not contain so many pages as the Doctor had written books. With the exception of these, and the scanty notices of general biography, Owen is only known by means of his writings.

No necessity exists for stating the claims which John Owen has to a distinct account of his life. Every theological scholar, every lover of experimental piety, every reader of our civil and ecclesiastical history, has heard of the name, and known something of the character, of Owen:—a man, 'admired when living, and adored when lost;'

whose works yet praise him in the gates, and by which he will continue to instruct and comfort the church for ages to come.

Those who believe that 'God hath made of one blood all nations of men,' will never be flattered by the pride of ancestry themselves, nor attach much importance to it in others. No harm, however, can arise from noticing, when it can be done with any degree of certainty, the particular line of the Adamic race to which a respected individual owes his birth. Regardless, therefore, of Bishop Watson's remark, 'that German and Welsh pedigrees are subjects of ridicule to most Englishmen,' we shall proceed to give a short account of the family of Owen.

John Owen was paternally descended from Lhewylin, second son of Gwrgan ap Ithel, Lord or Prince of Glamorgan, a wise and pacific ruler, who died in the year 1030; and Gwrgan ap Ithel, according to the Welsh genealogies, was descended in the thirty-first generation from the great Caractacus. Jestyn, eldest son of Gwrgan ap Ithel, progenitor of the last of the five royal tribes of Wales, was, in the year 1090, dispossessed of the castle of Cardiff by Sir Robert Fitz Hammon, a Norman adventurer, who, with his followers, took possession of Jestyn's dominions.

Humphrey Owen, grandfather of the subject of the history, married Susan, daughter of Griffith, a younger son of Lewis Owen, Esq., of Llwyn, near Dolgelly, a descendant of Ednowain ap Bradwin, Lord of Merioneth, and head of one of the fifteen tribes of North Wales, whose arms[a] Dr. Owen quartered with those of Gwrgan.[b] This Lewis Owen was Vice-Chamberlain of North Wales, and Baron of the Exchequer of North Wales; on his way to the Montgomeryshire assizes in 1555, he was attacked in the woods of Mowddy, at a place now called from the deed, Llidiait y Barwn, by a band of outlaws who had vowed to revenge on him the capture of fourscore of their companions; and being deserted by all his attendants, excepting his son-in-law John Llwyd, of Ceiswyn, he fell a sacrifice to their fury.

[a] Gules, three snakes enowed in a triangular knot, argent.
[b] Gules, three cheveronels, argent.

Humphrey Owen had fifteen sons, the youngest of whom was Henry, the father of the subject of our history.

Henry Owen, the youngest son of this numerous family, was bred to the Church. After studying at Oxford, he taught a school for some time at Stokenchurch.[c] He was afterwards chosen minister of Stadham, in the county of Oxford,[d] where he remained many years. In the latter part of his life he became rector of Harpsden, in the same county, where he died, on the eighteenth of September, 1649, in the sixty-third year of his age, and was buried in the chancel of the church.[e] 'My father,' said his son, 'was a Non-conformist all his days, and a painful labourer in the vineyard of the Lord.'[f] He was reckoned a strict Puritan, for his more than ordinary zeal, in those early days of reformation.[g]

The situation of the Puritans had for many years been gradually becoming more unpleasant and intolerable. The haughty spirit of Elizabeth had made their yoke heavy, but the vanity and dogmatism of her successor rendered it almost insupportable. The great body of them had no difference with their opponents about the lawfulness of civil establishments of Christianity. They entertained no doubts as to the propriety of using the sword, under certain modifications, for the purpose of producing unity of sentiment, and uniformity of practice in religion. They objected not so much to the interference of the civil power in the affairs of the church, as to the *mode* and *degree* of that interference. 'They were for *one* religion, *one* uniform mode of worship, *one* form of discipline for the whole nation, with which all must comply outwardly, whatever were their inward sentiments.[h]—The standard of uniformity, according to the Bishops, was the Queen's authority and the laws of the land; according to the Puritans, the decrees of provincial and national synods allowed and enforced by the civil magistrate: but neither party were for admitting that liberty of conscience and freedom of profession, which is every man's right as far as is consistent with the peace

[c] Athen. Ox. [d] Memoirs, p. 3. [e] Tree belonging to a branch of the family.
[f] Rev. of the Nat. of Schism. [g] Memoirs, p. 3.
[h] Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, vol. i. chap. iv. p. 136.

of the civil government under which he lives.'[1] Their objections to the Church of England respected chiefly the King's supremacy, and the alleged unscripturalness of some of its offices, and parts of its liturgy. Had the Crown resigned its authority to church rulers; had the offices of Metropolitan, Archbishop, and some others been abrogated; had the liturgy been reformed, the sign of the cross in Baptism, kneeling at the Supper, and bowing at the name of Jesus been done away; had they been allowed to wear a round instead of a square cap, and a black gown in place of a white surplice, the great mass of the early Puritans and even of the later Non-conformists would have become the warmest friends of the Church. They were not so much *Dissenters* from its constitution, as *Non-conformists* to some of its requisitions.

These things are stated, not to insinuate that the points in dispute were of small importance, (nothing being unimportant which is enforced on the conscience as part of religion,) but to shew what they really were, and to enable the reader to understand the nature and progress of those religious discussions, which for a long period occupied so large a portion of the public attention. It is not wonderful that the sentiments of the Puritans on many subjects were imperfect. It is rather surprising that they saw so much, and that they were able so boldly to contend for what they believed to be the cause of God. It can hardly be doubted that had their object been accomplished, the Church of England would have been much improved; and thus, so far as externals are concerned, it would have been brought nearer to the model of Scripture, and rendered more worthy of the designation which has often been applied to it, 'The glory and bulwark of the Reformation.'

High expectations were formed by the Puritans from the accession of James I. to the throne of England. But alas! they were all most miserably disappointed. James had been educated a Presbyterian, was a professed Calvinist, and a sworn Covenanter; but after he obtained the British crown he became a high Episcopalian, a determined Arminian, and a secret friend to Popery. His bad principles, injudicious alliances, and arbitrary conduct,

[1] Neal, i. p. 137.

laid the foundation of much future misery to his country; which burst like a torrent upon his successor, and finally swept his family from the throne. The Hampton Court conference, held in 1603, discovered the high ideas which he entertained of kingly prerogative, and how much he was disposed to domineer over the consciences of his subjects. 'No Bishop, no King' was his favourite maxim. 'I will have one doctrine, one discipline, one religion in substance and in ceremony,' said his Majesty, in the plenitude of his wisdom and authority; and concluded this mock discussion, in which the Puritans were browbeat and insulted, by avowing that he would make them conform, root them out of the land, or do worse.

For once, James was as good as his word, and every thing was done which was likely to render his conscientious subjects miserable, or drive them to extremities. The same measures were persevered in, and increased in severity, by the infatuated and unfortunate Charles. In consequence, many left the land of their fathers, and found a refuge or a grave in a distant wilderness; some wandered about in England, subject to many privations and hardships, doing good as they had opportunity; while others endeavoured to reconcile the rights of conscience with submission to the powers that were, and prayed and hoped for better days.

Of this last description was Henry Owen. A full account of his family is no longer to be obtained; it appears, however, that he had at least three sons and a daughter. His eldest son, William, was a clergyman; he is described in the records of the Herald's College 'Of Remnam, in the county of Berks, parson of Ewelme in the county of Oxford,' where he died in 1660, in the forty-eighth year of his age. His third son, Henry, appears to have chosen a military profession. He went over to Ireland with Cromwell, as an ensign, and there seems to have acquired some landed property. He died before his brother, but his son succeeded to the Doctor's estates in England.[1]

His daughter married Mr. John Hartcliffe, minister of Harding, in Oxfordshire, and afterwards of Windsor. Little is known of him; but his son made some figure. He was

[1] Dr. Owen's Will.

educated for the Church, and in 1681 succeeded, after a keen contest, Mr. John Goad, as master of Merchant Tailor's School. In the contest, he appears to have been assisted by his uncle, who exerted his influence among the London merchants, on behalf of his nephew. His predecessor Goad was ejected on account of his popish sentiments. Mr. Hartcliffe wrote several treatises, became D. D. in 1681, and died in 1702, Canon of Windsor.[k] It is said he once attempted to preach before Charles II. but not being able to utter one word of the sermon, he descended from the pulpit as great an orator as he went up, treating his Majesty with a silent meeting.[l]

John, the second son, was born at Stadham, in the year 1616; and after receiving, probably from his father, the first rudiments of education, was initiated into the principles of classical learning by Edward Sylvester, master of a private academy at Oxford. This respectable tutor, who not only taught Greek and Latin; but made or corrected Latin discourses, and Greek and Latin verses, for members of the University, who found it necessary to exhibit, what they were unable to produce, lived to see a number of his pupils make a distinguished figure in the world. Among these, besides Owen, were Dr. John Wilkins, celebrated for his philosophical talents; Dr. Henry Wilkinson, Margaret Professor in the University during the Commonwealth, and afterwards a celebrated Non-conformist; and a man better known than either of the preceding, William Chillingworth, the author of 'The Religion of Protestants,' a work which confers honour on the age and country that produced it.[m]

At school, Owen appears to have made rapid progress, for by the time he was only twelve years of age, he was fit for the University, and actually admitted a student of Queen's College, Oxford. We cannot doubt, that his father afforded him all the assistance in his power in the acquisition of learning, as he knew that he had no property to give him, and that his son would have to make his way through the world, by his own exertions. Nothing perhaps is more

[k] Nichol's Anecdotes, I. p. 64. Birch's Life of Tillotson, p. 238. Wood's Athen. Ox. ii. p. 637.

[l] Contrivances of the fanatical conspirators, by W. Smith.

[m] Wood's Athen. Passim.

unfavourable to genius and industry, than being born to a fortune already provided. It frequently destroys that excitement, which is absolutely necessary to counteract natural indolence; while it encourages those feelings of pride and self-importance, which are destructive of application and success. Hence, while the heir to titles and wealth has passed through the world in inglorious obscurity, the younger son has frequently supported and increased the honours of his family.

When Owen joined the University, and while he continued at it, few of its leading members were distinguished either for their learning or their talents. The Provost of his College was Dr. Christopher Potter, originally a Puritan, but after Laud's influence at Court prevailed, he became one of the creatures of that ambitious Prelate, and a supporter of his Arminian sentiments. Wood says he was learned and religious; but he produced nothing which discovers much of either; except a translation from the Italian of Father Paul's history of the 'Quarrels of Pope Paul V. with the State of Venice.'[n] The Vice-Chancellors of the University, during Owen's residence, were Accepted Frewen, afterwards Archbishop of York; William Smith, Warden of Wadham College; Brian Duppa, Bishop of Winchester, of whose qualifications Wood gives rather a curious account:—'He was a man of excellent parts, and every way qualified for his function, especially as to the comeliness of his person, and gracefulness of his deportment, which rendered him worthy of the service of a court, and every way fit to stand before Princes;'[o] Robert Pink, Warden of New College, a zealous defender of the rights of the University, and who was much esteemed by James I. for his dexterity in disputing, as he was also by Charles I. for his eminent loyalty;[p] and Dr. Richard Baylie, President of St. John's College, and Dean of Salisbury. The Margaret Professor of Divinity, was Dr. Samuel Fell, who was advanced by Laud to the Deanery of Lichfield. He was ejected from all his preferments by the Parliamentary visitors in 1647.[q] The Hebrew Professor was John Morris, of whom we know nothing as an oriental scholar; and Henry Stringer was Professor of Greek, of

[n] Athen. Ox. ii. pp. 44, 45. [o] Ibid. p. 177. [p] Ibid. p. 57. [q] Ibid. p. 63.

whose classical attainments we know as little. Barlow is almost the only name we are now disposed to associate with learning: all the others are either forgotten or unknown. How different the state of the University became, in regard to men of eminence and learning, when Owen filled its highest offices, will afterwards appear.

In Queen's College, Owen studied mathematics and philosophy under Thomas Barlow, then fellow of the College, of which he was afterwards chosen Provost, when Owen was Vice-chancellor. He was made a bishop in 1676, and lived till after the revolution. Barlow was a Calvinist in theology, an Aristotelian in philosophy, and an Episcopalian in church government. He was a man of eminent talents, and as great a master of the learned languages, and of the works of the celebrated authors who have written in them, as any man of his age.

Owen studied music, for recreation, under Dr. Thomas Wilson, a celebrated performer on the flute, who was in constant attendance for some years on Charles I. who used to lean on his shoulder during the time he played. He was made Professor of Music in Oxford by Owen, when he was Vice-chancellor of the University. This shews that the men of that period were neither so destitute of taste, nor so morose and unsocial as they have been often represented.[r]

Moderate talents, assisted by diligent application, will frequently do more than genius of a much higher order, whose efforts are irregular and desultory. But when talents and laborious exertion are combined with the fervour of youth and the aids of learning, much may be expected as the result. Our young student pursued the various branches of education with incredible diligence; allowing himself, for several years, not more than four hours sleep in a night. It is impossible not to applaud the ardour which this application discovers. The more time a student can redeem from sleep, and other indulgences, the better. But it is not every constitution that is capable of such an expenditure; and many an individual, in struggling beyond his strength for the prize of literary renown, has succeeded at the expense of his life, or of the

[r] Wood's Life, p. 92.

irreparable injury of his future comfort. Owen himself declared afterwards, that he would gladly part with all the learning he had acquired in younger life, by sitting up late at study, if he could but recover the health he had lost by it.[s] He who prefers mercy to sacrifice, requires nothing in ordinary circumstances beyond what the human system is fairly capable of bearing.

Owen appears to have been blessed with a sound and vigorous constitution. This, no doubt, enabled him to use greater freedoms than he durst otherwise have done; while to brace and strengthen it, he was not inattentive to those recreations which tend to counteract the pernicious effects of sedentary occupation. He was fond of violent and robust exertion,—such as leaping, throwing the bar, ringing bells, &c. Such diversions may appear to some ridiculous, and unbecoming; but this arises from inconsideration. That kind and degree of exercise which are necessary for preserving the proper temperament of the human system, are not only lawful, but a part of the duty which we owe to ourselves. Such recreations are not to be compared with those fashionable levities, and amusements, which only tend to vitiate the moral and intellectual powers, and to enervate rather than strengthen, the constitution. It is much more gratifying to see the academic robes waving in the wind, than shining at the midnight dance, or adorning the front ranks of a theatre.

On the 11th of June, 1632, Owen was admitted to the degree of B. A. and on the 27th of April, 1635, at the age of nineteen, he commenced Master of Arts,[t] a designation which, we cannot doubt, his learning and attainments entitled him to enjoy. When literary degrees are spurs to application, and the rewards of merit, they answer a useful purpose. But when they come to be indiscriminately bestowed, they lose their value, are despised by the genuine scholar, and are sought after only by those on whom they can confer no honour or distinction.

During this period of his life, his mind seems to have been scarcely, if at all, influenced by religious principle. His whole ambition was to raise himself to some eminent

[s] Gibbon's Life of Watts, p. 161.
[t] Wood's Fasti, vol. i. pp. 872—879.

station in church or state, to either of which he was then indifferent. He used afterwards to acknowledge, that, being naturally of an aspiring mind, and very desirous of honour and preferment, he applied very closely to his studies, in the hope of accomplishing these ends; and that then the honour of God, and the good of his country were objects subservient to the advancement of his own glory or interest. Had he continued in this state of mind, he would probably have succeeded; but it would have been in another cause than that to which he was finally devoted. Instead of a Puritan, he might have been found among their persecutors; and his name have descended to posterity in the roll of state oppressors, or secular churchmen. Many young persons have been devoted by their parents to the ministry, and have cultivated their talents in the hope of rising in it, who would have conferred a blessing on themselves, as well as on the church and the world, had they found another path to earthly glory. Some radical mistake must exist when the church of Christ becomes the theatre of worldly ambition. The merchandise of 'the souls of men,' is the most infamous traffic in which man can engage, and constitutes one of the chief of the delinquencies charged on the mystical Babylon.

Owen, however, was unconsciously to himself, preparing for another career. He was now under a higher, though unperceived influence, acquiring the capacity for using those weapons which he was destined to wield with mighty effect against all the adversaries of the gospel. 'Many purposes are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord that shall stand.' He probably often exulted in the prospect of wealth and honour, while God was preparing him to suffer many things for his name's sake, and for important usefulness in his cause.

The limited resources of his father prevented his allowing him any liberal support at the university; but this deficiency was amply made up by an uncle, the proprietor of a considerable estate in Wales; who, having no children of his own, intended to make him his heir. Although this intention was not carried into effect, his nephew must have felt grateful on account of the assistance afforded during his early years.

Previously to leaving the university, which took place in his twenty-first year, he appears to have become the subject of religious convictions. By what means these were produced, it is now impossible to ascertain. He had received a religious education in his father's house, and early impressions then made, may have been revived and deepened by circumstances which afterwards occurred. The impressions were very powerful, and appear to have deeply affected his mind, and even his health. The course of spiritual conflict through which he passed, undoubtedly fitted him for his work at a future period; and probably communicated that tone of spiritual feeling to his soul which runs through all his writings. The words of the apostle are no less applicable to mental than to bodily sufferings; 'who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.' If the spiritual physician knows nothing, from experience, of the malady of his patient, he is but imperfectly qualified to administer relief.

It was while under these religious convictions that Owen left the university; and as they chiefly led to this event, it is necessary to notice the circumstances which occasioned his secession. For several years a grand crisis between the court and the country had been approaching. The aggressions of the former on the civil and religious liberties of the latter, had become so numerous and so flagrant, as to occasion a very general spirit of discontent. In an evil day, Charles had advanced to the primacy of England, William Laud, a man of undoubted talents and learning; but of high monarchical principles; fond of pomp and ceremony; and, though no friend to the Pope at Rome, having little objection to be Pope in England. His arbitrary conduct in the star-chamber, his passion for ceremony in the church, and his love of Arminianism in the pulpit, hastened his own fate, and paved the way for that of his master. The best of the clergy were either silenced, or obliged to leave the country. High churchmen engrossed almost every civil as well as ecclesiastical office, to the disappointment of many, and to the vexation of all.

The same year, 1637, that produced Hampden's resist-

ance of illegal taxation, drove Owen from Oxford, in consequence of the ecclesiastical tyranny of Laud. Among the other situations, which that ambitious churchman had monopolized, was that of chancellor of Oxford. In virtue of his office, he caused a new body of statutes to be drawn up for the university; in the preface to which he distinctly intimated that he considered the days of Mary better than those of Edward; and enjoined obedience to certain superstitious rites on the members of the university, on pain of being expelled. Though the mind of Owen was not fully enlightened by the gospel, his conscience was brought so far under its authority, that he could not submit to these human exactions. On the one side, lay all his worldly prospects, on the other, the approbation of Heaven. He had the faith and courage to embrace the choice of Moses; and relinquished the pleasures of the world, rather than sacrifice the honour of his God.

This change of feeling and sentiment was soon discovered by his former friends; who, as usually happens in such cases, forsook the man whom neither the king nor the primate would delight to honour. The result of refusing to submit, and of the opposition of Laud's party, was his leaving the university, never to return, until he who disposes equally the lot of nations and of individuals, placed him at the head of that celebrated body.

During this struggle, the mind of Owen appears to have been in great spiritual perplexity; which, combined with his external circumstances, and the discouraging prospects then presented, threw him into a state of profound melancholy. For a quarter of a year he avoided almost all intercourse with men; could scarcely be induced to speak; and when he did say any thing, it was in so disordered a manner as rendered him a wonder to many. Only those who have experienced the bitterness of a wounded spirit can form an idea of the distress he must have suffered. Compared with this anguish of soul, all the afflictions which befal a sinner are but trifles. One drop of that wrath which shall finally fill the cup of the ungodly, poured into the mind, is enough to poison all the comforts of life, and to spread mourning, lamentation, and woe over the countenance. It is not in the least wonderful that cases of

this kind sometimes occur; but, considering the character of man, rather surprising that they are not more frequent. Were men disposed to reflect seriously on their present condition, and to contemplate their future prospects; nothing but the gospel could preserve them from the deepest despair. To this severe distress, he perhaps alludes, among other things, when he says, 'The variety of outward providences and dispensations wherewith I have myself been exercised, together with the inward trials with which they have been attended, have left such a constant sense and impression on my spirit, that I cannot but own a serious call to men to beware.'[t] Such a conflict of feeling, and of so long continuance, it would have been strange had he ever forgotten; and, 'knowing the terrors of the Lord,' stranger still, had he ceased to beseech men to avoid them.

It is the opprobrium of Oxford that Locke was expelled from its bowers; it is little less to its disgrace that such a man as Owen was compelled to withdraw from them. The treatment which both these learned men experienced in this celebrated seat of loyalty and learning, probably contributed, in no small degree, to produce that deep-rooted dislike to civil and ecclesiastical domination, which appears so conspicuously in their writings. That which men intended for evil, however, God overruled for good. The influence of Owen's early secession from that body which holds the right of the church, or rather of the king, to decree 'rites and ceremonies,' was felt by him during the whole course of his future life. There is a comfort connected with following the dictates of conscience in obeying the word of the Lord, which imparts a vigour and independence to the human character, that can never be felt by the time-serving votaries of church or state; and which is infinitely more valuable than all the honours of the one, or the emoluments of the other. It is common to treat the conduct of such persons as Owen, who left the church for refusing to submit to the interference of human authority, as unnecessarily punctilious, and as resulting from a narrow conformation of mind. But let it be remembered, that it was not a particular rite or ceremony to which they refused submission, so much as to the principle which they

[t] Preface to the work on temptation.

were required to recognize. The greatness of their minds appeared in their accurate investigations of religious truth, and in their willingly exposing themselves to severe suffering for its sake. The strong view which Owen took of the matter, is well expressed in the following passage:—

'I shall take leave to say what is upon my heart, and what, the Lord assisting, I shall willingly endeavour to make good against all the world, that that principle, that the church hath power to institute any thing or ceremony belonging to the worship of God, either as to matter or manner, beyond the orderly observance of such circumstances as necessarily attend such ordinances as Christ himself hath instituted, lies at the bottom of all the horrible superstition and idolatry, of all the confusion, blood, persecution, and wars, that have for so long a season spread themselves over the face of the Christian world; and that it is the design of a great part of Revelation to discover this truth. And I doubt not but that the great controversy which God hath had with this nation, for so many years, was upon this account, that, contrary to that glorious light of the gospel which shone among us, the wills and fancies of men, under the name of order, decency, and the authority of the church (a *chimera* that none knew what it was, nor wherein the power of it did consist, nor in whom it resided), were imposed on men in the worship of God. Hence was the Spirit of God in prayer derided, hence was the powerful preaching of the gospel despised, hence was the sabbath decried, hence was holiness stigmatized and persecuted. And for what? That Jesus Christ might be deposed from the sole privilege and power of making laws in his church, that the true husband might be thrust aside, and adulterers of his spouse embraced! that task-masters might be appointed over his house which "he never gave to his church," Eph. iv. 12. That a ceremonious, pompous worship, drawn from Pagan, Jewish, and Antichristian observances, might be introduced; of all which there is not one word or iota in the whole book of God. This then, they who hold communion with Christ are careful of; they will admit nothing, practise nothing, in the worship of God, private or public, but what they have his warrant for.

Unless it comes in his name, with Thus saith the Lord Jesus, they will not hear an angel from heaven.'[u]

The circumstance of Owen's leaving Oxford, affords Anthony Wood, who rejoices to slander Puritans and Round-Heads, an opportunity of accusing him of perjury.[x] When Owen joined the university, he very probably took the oaths, and made the usual subscription. When he saw them to be unlawful, or felt that they involved consequences of which he had not been aware, he renounced them. If this be perjury, it remains to be considered, whether the guilt lies with those who impose oaths and subscriptions on boys, which they cannot understand, and which, when they come to be men, they repent they ever should have taken; or with those who are thus innocently insnared. Before such conduct can be charged with perjury, the lawfulness of the oath must be shewn; as unlawful vows require repentance, and not fulfilment. All such subscriptions are the result of unrighteous impositions, impede the progress of truth, insnare the minds of the subscribers, and operate as a bounty on hypocrisy. They secure a monopoly of privileges to the chartered corporation; and exclude from the enjoyment of advantages that ought to be common, a large portion of the principle and talent of the country.

Before he left college, he received orders from Bishop John Bancroft, nephew to the celebrated Archbishop of the same name, who occupied the diocese of Oxford from 1632 to 1640. After leaving it, he lived for some time as chaplain to Sir Robert Dormer, of Ascot in Oxfordshire, and as tutor to his eldest son. When he left him, he became chaplain to Lord Lovelace, of Hurly in Berkshire.[y] In this situation he continued till the civil war broke out, when, Lord Lovelace espousing the cause of the king, and Owen that of the parliament, a separation naturally took place. This step was attended with very important consequences to Owen. His uncle, being a determined Royalist, was so enraged at his nephew for attaching himself to the parliament, that he turned him at once out of favour, settled his estate on another, and died without leaving him

[u] Owen on Communion. [x] Athen. Ox. ii. 555.
[y] Athen. Ox. ii. p. 556.

any thing. A step, which was attended with such consequences was not likely to be rashly taken. They shew that he must have been influenced by some very powerful considerations, and that, having taken his ground, he was not to be driven from it, by regard to the favour of friends, or the sordid interests of this world.[z]

The civil war has been often rashly and unjustly charged upon the Puritans or Non-conformists; and, notwithstanding the force of evidence with which the accusation has been repelled, the charge still continues to be repeated. The enemies, and even the mistaken friends of religion, endeavour to fix the crime of rebellion on men, who deserve to be held in everlasting remembrance, instead of being execrated, for what they did. Religious dissatisfaction was only one of the many causes of that tremendous convulsion, and religious persons composed but one of the classes which produced it. The continual breaches made on the constitution by Charles I. from the period of his accession to the throne, till he was forced to leave it;—his arbitrary treatment of his parliaments; his persevering attempts to render himself independent of their authority; his illegal modes of raising money; the oppression and cruelty with which those who asserted their civil or religious rights were treated, were the real causes of the war. And that these measures were prompted chiefly by a high church and ultra monarchical party, which had the management of the king, and which goaded him on to the last, is evident to all who have paid the least attention to the history of the period.

So far from the Non-conformists being the authors of the rebellion, as it is called, Clarendon himself acknowledges that 'the major part of the long parliament consisted of men who had no mind to break the peace of the kingdom, or to make any considerable alteration in the government of church or state.'[a] As an evidence of their attachment to the church, seventeen days after their first meeting, they made an order that none should sit in the house, but such as would receive the communion according to the church of England.[b] The Earl of Essex, the Parliamentary General, was an Episcopalian; the Admiral

[z] Memoirs. [a] Hist. of the Reb. i. p. 184. [b] Tind. Con. p. 5.

who seized the king's ships, and employed them against him, was the same; Sir John Hotham, who shut the gates of Hull against him, was a churchman; the same may be affirmed of Sir Henry Vane, Sen.; of Lenthal, the speaker; of the celebrated Pym, and of most of the other leading persons in parliament, and in the army: so that it is clear as noon day, that whatever fault attaches to the civil war must be imputed not to the Non-conformists exclusively, but to the church of England, whose members were first and deepest in the quarrel.[c]

The object, for a considerable time, of that momentous contest on the part of the community, was a change of men and measures, and not a subversion of the constitution of either church or state. Had Charles driven off his popish and unconstitutional counsellors; consented to govern by regular parliaments; been sincere in fulfilling his promises; granted even a limited toleration to his persecuted subjects, and changed some of his most unadvised and unpopular measures: he might have retrieved his affairs, established his throne, saved the lives of many thousands of his subjects, and of more than fifty millions of money to his country,—besides preventing that dreadful catastrophe which men of all parties must deplore.

The war increased the number of Presbyterians, and augmented their influence by the calling in of the Scots; it afforded opportunity to the Independents to propagate their sentiments, and to multiply their disciples; it occasioned also the increase of the Baptists, and of some smaller sects: but that any, or all of these religious parties, were the causes of the war, the chief instruments in carrying it on, or justly chargeable with the excesses which took place, is unsupported by evidence, and contrary to clearly established facts.

The situation of religious people during this trying period, must have been very perplexing. Neutrality was scarcely possible, especially on the part of such as held rank or office in the country. Those who joined the king were counted enemies to the liberties of England; those who joined the parliament were reckoned enemies to legitimate authority. Politics, however unfriendly to the

[c] Clarendon passim, Life of Baxter, Part iii. p. 249.

growth of religion, required to be studied, that the subject might know his duty. All the Non-conformists naturally took part with the house of commons, as they saw clearly that nothing short of their ruin was determined by the king. Most of those who wished well to true religion, though attached to the church, acted in the same manner; as it was evident, that religion was more at heart with the parliamentary party than with the king's. The friends of liberty, of every description, of course supported the popular side of the constitution against the encroachments of prerogative. It is exceedingly unfair to charge those who acted in this manner with rebellion. The house of commons forms an essential part of the British Constitution, as well as the monarch. At this lamentable period, the constitution was divided against itself. War was openly maintained between the king and the parliament. Liberty and redress were the professed objects of the one party, power that of the other. If you took part with the king, you were liable to be punished by the parliament; and, if you supported the parliament, you were in danger from the wrath of the king. So long as the constitution was thus divided, no man could be justly chargeable with crime, in following either the one party or the other, as his judgment dictated.

As Owen had no other connexion with party politics, than what arose from necessity, a view of the progress of civil discord, or a defence of the measures pursued by the parliament, cannot be expected here. No doubt can be entertained of his sincerity, and as conscience evidently directed the part which he took, had the cause been even more doubtful than it appears to me to have been, he ought to have the full benefit of this plea. 'Many, no doubt,' says the late Rev. Thomas Scott, a respectable minister of the Church of England, 'who obtained an undue ascendancy among the Puritans, in the turbulent days of Charles the First, and even before that time, were factious, ambitious hypocrites; but I must think, that the tree of liberty, sober and legitimate liberty, *civil and religious*, under the shadow of which, we, in the establishment as well as others, repose in peace, and the fruit of which we gather, was planted by the Puritans, and watered, if not by

their blood, at least by their tears and sorrows. *Yet, it is the modern fashion to feed delightfully on the fruit, and then revile, if not curse, those who planted and watered it.*'[d]

Owen's patron having joined the king's army, he went up to London, where he was an entire stranger, and took lodgings in Charter House yard. Though the violence of his convictions had subsided after the first severe conflict, they still continued to disturb his peace, and nearly five years elapsed from their commencement till he obtained solid comfort. This was a long time to be harassed with fears and despondency; and may probably have been occasioned by his inquiries taking a direction which increased the evil they were intended to remove. The dawn of light, however, was now at hand. The glory of the gospel speedily dispersed his darkness, and produced feelings of joy, corresponding with his former depression, and of which he never seems to have been altogether again deprived.

During his residence in the Charter House, he accompanied his cousin Mr. Owen, a respectable brewer in the city, to Aldermanbury church to hear Mr. Edmund Calamy, a man of great note for his eloquence as a preacher, and for his boldness as a leader of the Presbyterian party. By some circumstance, unexplained, Mr. Calamy was prevented from preaching that day. In consequence of which, and of not knowing who was to preach, many left the church. Owen's friend urged him to go and hear Mr. Jackson, the minister of St. Michael's, Wood-street, a man of prodigious application as a scholar, and of considerable celebrity as a preacher. Being seated, however, and unwilling to walk further, he refused to leave the church till he should see who was to preach. At last a country minister, unknown to the congregation, stepped into the pulpit, and after praying very fervently, took for his text, Matt. viii. 26. 'Why are ye fearful? O ye of little faith!' The very reading of the text appears to have impressed him, and led him to pray most earnestly that the Lord would bless the discourse to his soul. The prayer was heard; for in that sermon, the minister was directed to answer the very objections, which

[d] Quoted in the Eclectic Rev. vol. vii. p. 11.

he had commonly brought against himself; and though the same answers had often occurred to him, they had not before afforded him any relief. But now, Jehovah's time of mercy had arrived, and the truth was received, not as the word of man, but as the word of the living and true God. The sermon was a very plain one, the preacher was never known; but the effect was mighty through the blessing of God.

All instruments are efficient in the hand of the Great Spirit. It is not by might or by power, that the Lord frequently effects the greatest works; but by means apparently feeble, and even contemptible. Calamy was a more eloquent and polished preacher than this country stranger, and yet Owen had, perhaps, heard him often in vain. Had he left the church, as was proposed, he might have been disappointed elsewhere; but he remained, and enjoyed the blessing. The facts now recorded may afford encouragement and reproof, both to ministers and hearers. It may not always be practicable to hear whom we admire; but if he be a man of God, an eminent blessing may accompany his labours. The country minister may never have known, till he arrived in another world, that he had been instrumental in relieving the mind of John Owen. Many similar occurrences are never known here. How encouraging is this to the faithful labourer! It may appear strange to some, that the same truths should be productive of effect at one time, and not at another. But those who are at all acquainted with the progress of the gospel among men will not be surprised. The success of Christianity, in every instance, is the effect of Divine, sovereign influence; and that is exerted in a manner exceedingly mysterious to us. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' The darkness of Owen's mind was now happily removed; his health, which had been impaired by depression of spirits, was restored, and he was filled with joy and peace in believing.

The long and heavy depression which Owen had laboured under, by his own account, had greatly subdued his natural vanity and ambition. The circumstances of

his conversion convinced him of the utter insufficiency of mere learning to accomplish the salvation of men. His own experience must have simplified his views of the gospel, and of the mode of stating it to others; and contributed to impart that spiritual unction to his preaching and writing, by which they are eminently distinguished. When, or where, he began his labours in the ministry, we cannot discover. It is very probable that he commenced in London, and about the period of this remarkable change; not long, perhaps, before his appearance as an author, in which capacity we shall now proceed to view him.

While living in Charter House yard, he published his 'Display of Arminianism, &c.' 4to.[e] A work which deserves attention on its own account, from its being the first performance of our Author, and from having contributed to lay the foundation of his future reputation. The imprimatur is dated March 2d, 1642. It is highly probable, that the unhappy state of his own mind, was occasioned by some misunderstanding of the subjects which the Arminian controversy embraces; and that this led him so fully to investigate them, as this tract discovers he had done. As it appeared soon after he had obtained comfort, a great part of it must have been written before, or at least, so fully digested in his mind, that he could soon put it together after he got possession of the key which unlocks most of the difficulties.

The Arminian discussion involves a variety of important points, some of which are not peculiar to Christianity; and which have been the fruitful sources of fierce contention. Milton represents the fallen angels themselves, as disputing on some of them, and with no better success than men.

> 'Others apart sat on a hill retir'd
> In thought more elevate; and reason'd high
> Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
> Fix'd fate, freewill, foreknowledge absolute;
> And found no end in wand'ring mazes lost.'

The discussions of the ancient philosophers about the *Origo Mali;* the disputes of the Fathers and Schoolmen, and of the Jesuits and Jansenists, about grace and predestination; and the altercations of modern philosophers,

[e] Works, vol. v. p. 41.

respecting liberty and necessity, are all related to the Arminian controversy, and may all be traced to a common cause,—the desire to know what God has not revealed, and to reconcile apparent difficulties in the government of heaven, with the constitution of man. What the dark ages could not conceal, or popery itself subdue, the Reformation was more likely to revive than to extinguish. Accordingly, the work of Erasmus, 'De Libero Arbitrio,' and the reply of Luther, 'De Servo Arbitrio,' shew how early these subjects occupied the attention of the Reformers, and with what keenness they engaged in their discussion. Calvin took high ground in this controversy; and, both by his talents and learning, was peculiarly fitted to explore the niceties of theological and metaphysical debate. His leading views, which he stated with great perspicuity, and defended with uncommon ability, were both more scriptural, and more philosophical, than those to which they were opposed; but in his minor details and illustrations, he has sometimes expressed himself incautiously, and has afforded too much room for Arminians to dispute, and for Antinomians to abuse his doctrines.

Long before the time of Arminius, some of the principles which he brought forward, had been introduced into the Low Countries; but were prevented from making much progress, by the vigilance of the clergy, and the opposition of the magistrates. When published by him, they experienced both support and opposition. He died after the controversy had raged with considerable fierceness, but before it assumed that formidable aspect which finally involved the States in the most violent civil commotions. After his death the debates continued to spread over Holland. The side of the Arminians was taken by Episcopius, who became their leader, by Grotius and Hoogerbeets. It was opposed by Gomarus for religious, and by Maurice, Prince of Orange, for political, reasons. The far-famed Synod of Dort was called to heal the divisions, and to reconcile the contending parties of the church. As might have been expected, this measure completely failed, though it cost the States ten tons of gold. The Arminians complained that they were brow-beaten, and condemned instead

of being heard; and for refusing to submit, were imprisoned and banished.[f]

From Holland, the dispute was imported into Britain. Previous to the Synod of Dort, though individuals might have believed and taught differently, Calvinism was the prevailing theological system of this country. The complexion of the Thirty-nine Articles is evidently Calvinistic. In this sense they were understood by their framers, as the British, as well as the Continental, Reformers, were almost all Predestinarians. This sense was affixed to them by the succeeding Fathers of the English Church, and by the body of the Puritans. It was among the ridiculous inconsistencies of James I. to oppose the Arminians abroad, and to support them at home. He wrote against Arminius; protested against the appointment of Vorstius to succeed him in the divinity chair of Leyden; sent deputies to the Synod of Dort to get the party condemned; and, about the same time, used means for its advancement in England. In 1616, he sent directions to the university of Oxford, respecting the disputed points. In 1622, orders were issued that none under the degree of bishop, or dean, should preach on any of these topics. The Arminian clergy were promoted in the church, and their writings protected. The reasons of this inconsistency in James's conduct, are to be found in his love of flattery and power. The English Arminians were, in general, high church, fawning courtiers, who were ever ready to burn incense at the altar of the king's supremacy, and to preach to the multitude his divine right to dispose of their persons and properties as he thought proper.[g]

What the father thus inconsistently supported, the son endeavoured to raise to celebrity. In the reign of Charles I. Arminianism, combined with the doctrine of passive obedience, and respect for Popish ceremonies, became the religion of the court, and the road to royal favour. The whole high church party, with Laud at its head, ranked under its banners, and supported its authority by royal and epis-

[f] Brandt's Hist. of the Reform. in the Low Countries, vol. ii. Hale's Letters from the Synod of Dort.

[g] Brandt, i. pp. 318—321. Heylin's Quinquarticular Hist. p. 633. Neal. ii. pp. 132. 136.

copal patronage, and high commission and star-chamber decisions. 'Truth is suppressed,' said Sir Edward Deering, in a speech in the house of commons, 'and popish pamphlets fly abroad, "cum privilegio;" witness the audacious and libelling pamphlets against true religion by Pocklington, Heylin, Cosins, Studley, and many more; I name no bishops, I only add, &c.'[h]

The progress of Arminianism in England, and the causes of that progress, are thus ingeniously noticed by Owen in the preface to this first production of his pen. 'Never were so many prodigious errors introduced into a church, with so high a hand, and with so little opposition, since Christians were known in the world. The chief cause I take to be, that which Eneas Sylvius gave, why more maintained the Pope to be above the Council, than the Council above the Pope. Because Popes gave archbishoprics and bishoprics, &c.; but the Councils sued "in forma pauperis;" and, therefore, could scarce get an advocate to plead their cause. The fates of our church having of late devolved the government of it on men tainted with this poison, Arminianism became backed with the powerful arguments of praise and preferment, and quickly beat poor naked truth into a corner.'

The great object of the work is, to give a view of the sentiments of the Arminians, on the decrees of God; Divine foreknowledge; Providence; the resistibility of Divine grace; original sin; and, in short, all the leading topics of this important and extensive controversy. He extracts from the writings, chiefly of the continental divines, those passages which contain the most explicit declaration of their sentiments; and states what had occurred to him, in the way of answer. Each chapter is concluded by a tabular view of those passages of Scripture, which support the orthodox doctrine, and with quotations from Arminian writers that seem to oppose it. It is, therefore, according to its title, *A display* of Arminianism, not a full discussion of the controversy. How far modern Arminians would abide by the views which are here given of their sentiments, I can scarcely tell; but it cannot be doubted that Owen

[h] Deering's Speeches, p. 13.

has given a fair account of the opinions of their ancestors; and though some of the passages which he quotes, ought not, perhaps, to be rigidly interpreted, and should be explained in connexion with other parts of their writings; enough still remains to shew that their doctrines were far removed from the simplicity and purity of Scripture. The body of modern Calvinists would not adopt every expression and sentiment of Owen's Display; not because they are more arminianized than their fathers, but because they express themselves in fewer words, and are not so much attached to the peculiar phraseology of scholastic disputation.

The style of the Display is simpler, and less strongly marked with the peculiarities of the Author, than some of his subsequent performances. He had more time to bestow in correcting and polishing it, than he afterwards could command. It discovers occasionally a considerable degree of sharpness and severity; to which he may have been led, not so much by the asperity of his own temper, as by the licentious freedoms of the writers he opposes, and by his strong convictions of the dangerous tendency of their opinions. It is the duty of all who know the gospel, and especially of those who preach it, to watch the progress of error, and to endeavour to obstruct it; but it is of infinite importance that this should be done with Christian temper, and by the employment only of those weapons which Christianity sanctions.

The Display is dedicated to the Committee of Religion, and is appointed to be printed by the Committee of the house of commons, for regulating the printing, and publishing of books. In the dedication he expresses himself very strongly about the evils, which he apprehended would come upon the state, through the differences in the church, and implores the parliament's interference. 'Are there any disturbances of the state?' says he, 'they are usually attended with schisms and factions in the church; and the divisions of the church are too often the subversion of the commonwealth.' Owen was destined soon to acquire more correct sentiments:—to see that no political divisions, or disturbances, in the kingdoms of the earth ought to interrupt the peace and unity of the kingdom of Christ; and that

no other remedy ought to be employed for the cure of error, than the application of truth.

The first effect of this publication, was his presentation to the living of Fordham in Essex, by the Committee for purging the church of scandalous ministers, by the hands of a special messenger. The incumbent, who had been sequestered on the petition of the parish, was Richard Pully, who, according to Walker, was 'a person of great learning, religion, and sobriety; but was turned out to make way for one,' whom he erroneously calls 'an Independent of New England.'[i] The Committee, it would appear, were of a different opinion. The presentation was an honourable mark of their approbation, and did credit both to themselves, and to our Author. His acceptance afforded much satisfaction to the parish, and also to the surrounding country. While here, it is stated, that an eminent blessing attended his labours. Many resorted to hear him from other parishes, and not a few, through the blessing of God, were led to the knowledge of the truth. The faithful minister will never pass unrewarded. In all situations, God will acknowledge that portion of his own truth which is conscientiously brought forward; and seal with success that which has the sanction of his own authority.

Soon after he had taken up his residence in Fordham, he married his first wife, whose name is said to have been Rooke. By this lady he had eleven children, all of whom died young, except one daughter, who married Roger Kennington, a Welsh gentleman. The match proving an unhappy one, she returned to her father's house, where she died of a consumption. No particulars now remain of this lady; but she is said to have been a person of very excellent character.[k] To her, Mr. Gilbert in his third epitaph on the Doctor, alludes in these lines:—

Prima Ætatis Virilis consors Maria
Rei domesticæ perite studiosa
Rebus Dei domus se totum addicendi,
Copiam illi fecit Gratissimam.

[i] Sufferings of the Clergy, p. 320.

[k] Memoirs—Owen's Will.

CHAP. II.

Owen's connexion with the Presbyterian body—its state at that time—Baxter's account of it—its Intolerance—Owen publishes his 'Duty of Pastors and People'—His 'Two Catechisms'—Preaches before Parliament—Publication of the Discourse, and his Essay on Church Government—His views of Uniformity and Toleration—Leaves Fordham.

By accepting the living of Fordham, Owen formally connected himself with the Presbyterian body, which about that time enjoyed the greatest prosperity at which it ever arrived in England. Whether Presbyterianism was the form of government which prevailed in the primitive church, it is not our object, at present, to ascertain; but, that Calvin was the first, after the reformation, who brought it into notice, and reduced it to practice, is, we believe, generally admitted. Whether it was suggested to him by the Civil Government of Geneva, or entirely by the New Testament, will be credited, according as men are the abettors or opponents of his system. Be this as it may, in the school of Geneva originated the Presbyterianism of Britain. The English exiles, driven from their native country, by the oppressions of popery and prelacy, to that city of liberty, were alienated from the system in which most of them had been educated, as well by the conduct of its supporters, as by their conviction of its contrariety to the word of God. They were thus prepared to view, with a favourable eye, a form of government and worship, which had more support in Scripture; which provided a greater degree of parity and power for all the ministers of the church; and which seemed to be productive of a large portion, both of spiritual and temporal good to men. The adoption of this system by the reformed churches of Holland, France, Scotland, and part of Germany, promoted its influence, and increased its celebrity. The writings of Calvin, Beza, and other celebrated men of the same school, were extensively read, and their authority generally respected; while the intercourse between England and those countries, greatly increased by the tyrannical measures of government, advanced the progress of its career in that quarter.

The body of the Puritans were never entirely of the same mind on the subject of church government. Not a few of them were, without doubt, rigid Presbyterians; but many of them would have gladly submitted to a modified Episcopacy, such as that which Archbishop Usher recommended. The Divine right of classical Presbytery came to be contended for, chiefly after the Scots' army was brought into England, and when a uniformity of faith and worship in the three kingdoms began to be enforced. As, for a considerable time, it appeared likely to gain the ascendancy, most of those who fell off from Episcopacy, from dissatisfaction with its forms, united themselves with it, though many of them were not disposed to admit all its pretensions.[a]

Owen, as far as he was a Presbyterian, was one of this description. Speaking of his sentiments at this period of his life, and of a Treatise then published, which we shall immediately notice, he says, 'I was then a young man, about the age of twenty-six or twenty-seven. The controversy between Independency and Presbytery was then young also; nor, indeed, by me clearly understood; especially as stated on the Congregational side. The conceptions delivered in the Treatise were not, as appears in the issue, suited to the opinion of the one party or the other; but were such as occurred to mine own naked consideration of things, with relation to some differences that were then upheld in the place where I lived. Only being unacquainted with the Congregational way, I professed myself to own the other party, not knowing but that my principles were suited to their judgment and profession; *having looked very little farther into those affairs, than I was led by an opposition to Episcopacy and ceremonies.*'[b]

Presbyterianism was not established in England 'by way of probation,'[c] as Neal expresses it, until 1645; and as presbyteries were not erected for some time after this, and in many places never erected, it is not probable that Owen was ever a member of a presbytery. This circumstance, together with his sentiments as stated in the above extract, shews that his connexion with that body was more nominal

[a] Baxter's own Life, i. p. 97. et passim. [b] Review of the true nature of Schism.
[c] Hist. of the Puritans, iii. chap. vi. p. 295.

than real. To give a correct view of its religious character about this time is not an easy task. The partiality of its friends has led them to exaggerate its excellencies, and the dislike of its enemies has induced them to aggravate and multiply its faults. It doubtless embraced many individuals, estimable for their piety, and distinguished for their learning; and not a few who had suffered much in the cause of God. In a body which contained many faithful preachers of the truth, there must have been a large portion of genuine religion; although, from its principles, many were admitted into fellowship with it, whose profession could not have borne a close investigation.[e] The testimony of Baxter, whose opportunities of judging were abundant, and whose partiality to the Presbyterians secures him from the suspicion of misrepresenting them, is as follows:—

'The persons who were called Presbyterians were eminent for learning, sobriety, and piety; and the pastors, so called, were they that went through the work of the ministry, in diligent, serious preaching to the people, and edifying men's souls, and keeping up religion in the land.'[f] —But 'I disliked the course of some of the more rigid of them, that drew too near the way of prelacy, by grasping at a kind of secular power; not using it themselves, but binding the magistrates to confiscate or imprison men, merely because they were excommunicated; and so corrupting the true discipline of the church, and turning the communion of saints into the communion of the multitude, that must keep in the church against their wills, for fear of being undone in the world. Whereas a man whose conscience cannot feel a just excommunication, unless it be backed with confiscation or imprisonment, is no fitter to be a member of a Christian church, than a corpse is to be a member of a corporation.—They corrupt the discipline of Christ by mixing it with secular force; and they reproach the keys, or ministerial power, as if it were not worth a straw unless the magistrate's sword enforce it; and worst of all, they corrupt the church by forcing in the rabble of the unfit, and unwilling, and thereby tempt many godly Christians to schisms and dangerous separations. Till

[e] Baillie's Dissuasive, pp. 154—174. [f] Baxter's own Life, part ii. p. 140.

magistrates keep the sword themselves, and learn to deny it to every angry clergyman that would do his own work by it, and leave them to their own weapons,—the word and spiritual keys; "et valeant quantum valere possunt;" the church shall never have unity and peace. And I disliked some of the Presbyterians that they were not tender enough to dissenting brethren; but too much *against liberty*, as others were too much *for* it; and thought by votes and number to do that which love and reason should have done.'[g]

The worst feature certainly of Presbytery, about this time, that which excited the greatest attention, and which ultimately ruined its influence, was its intolerance; or determined and persevering hostility to liberty of conscience. The most celebrated Presbyterian divines, such as Calamy and Burgess, in their discourses before parliament, represented toleration as the hydra of schisms and heresies, and the floodgate to all manner of iniquity and danger; which, therefore, the civil authorities ought to exert their utmost energy to put down.[h] Their most distinguished writers advocated the rights of persecution, and endeavoured to reason, or rail down religious liberty. With this view chiefly, Edwards produced his 'Gangrena,' and his 'Casting down of the last and strongest hold of Satan, or a Treatise against Toleration.'!!! And, not to notice the ravings of Bastwick, and Paget, and Vicars, it is painful to quote the respectable names of Principal Baillie of Glasgow, and Samuel Rutherford, Professor of Divinity in St. Andrews, as engaged in supporting so bad a cause. The former, throughout his 'Dissuasive,' discovers how determined a foe he was, to what he calls a 'monstrous imagination.'[i] The latter, wrote a quarto volume of four hundred pages 'against pretended liberty of conscience.'!! It was the Trojan horse whose bowels were full of warlike sectaries, and weapons of destruction. Like the fabled box of Pandora, it had only to be opened to let loose upon the world all the ills which ever afflicted our race. It was the Diana, before whose shrine the motley groupes of dissenters from presbytery were represented as making their devout-

[g] Baxter's own Life, part ii. pp. 142, 143.
[h] Crosby's History of the Baptists, i. pp. 176, 177.
[i] Pref. to part ii.

est prostrations. That I do not caricature the persons of whom I am speaking, let the following specimen shew:—

'A Toleration is the grand design of the devil—his master-piece, and chief engine he works by at this time, to uphold his tottering kingdom. It is the most compendious, ready, sure way to destroy all religion, lay all waste, and bring in all evil. It is a most transcendent, catholic, and fundamental evil for this kingdom of any that can be imagined. As original sin is the most fundamental sin, having the seed and spawn of all in it; so a toleration hath all errors in it, and all evils. It is against the whole stream and current of Scripture both in the Old and New Testament; both in matters of faith and manners; both general and particular commands. It overthrows all relations, political, ecclesiastical, and economical. And whereas other evils, whether of judgment or practice, be but against some one or two places of Scripture or relation, this is against all—this is the Abaddon, Apollyon, the destroyer of all religion, the abomination of desolation and astonishment, the liberty of perdition, and therefore the devil follows it night and day; working mightily in many by writing books for it, and other ways;—All the devils in hell, and their instruments, being at work to promote a toleration.'[k]

Had these been the sentiments of a few private and violent individuals only, it might have been proper to pass them by, as giving an unfair view of the principles or spirit of the party with which they were connected; but when similar sentiments and temper are discovered in the public and united proceedings of the body, the matter is very different. That this was the case with the Presbyterians, at this time, is too evident from many facts. The Presbyterian party in the Westminster Assembly defeated the attempt, recommended by the committee of the Lords and Commons, to promote a union, if possible, with the Independents. They refused even to tolerate their churches. Baxter acknowledges that they were so little sensible of their own infirmities, that they would not agree to tolerate those who were not only tolerable, but worthy instruments and members in the churches.[l] When they found the Commons would not support their violent and unreasonable

[k] Edward's Gangrena, part i. p. 58. [l] Neal iii. ch. vi. pp. 302—310.

demands to suppress all other sects, they brought forward the Scots' parliament to demand that their advices should be complied with, and to publish a declaration against toleration.[m] The whole body of the London ministers addressed a letter to the Assembly, in which they most solemnly declare how much they 'detest and abhor the much endeavoured toleration.'[n] The '*Jus divinum* of church government,' published by the same body, argues for 'a compulsive, coactive, punitive, corrective power to the political magistrate in matters of religion.'[o] The provincial assembly of London, the ministers of Warwickshire and Lancashire, published declarations or addresses to the same purport.[p]

Enough on so unpleasant a subject. Whatever differences existed in this party about other things, a perfect harmony seems to have prevailed on this. They were evidently startled and alarmed at the strange appearances of the religious world. They apprehended nothing less than the utter destruction of religion from the liberty which men had begun to enjoy. Their fears magnified the danger, and their attachment to the cause of God led them to express themselves in the unwarrantable manner which we have seen. It is only matter of thankfulness that they were not permitted to grasp the sword, otherwise something more dreadful than intemperate language would probably have followed.

Their violent sentiments and proceedings must have alienated many from their cause, and led moderate men to doubt the foundation of a system which seemed to require such support. These, in fact, were the things which entirely ruined their interest. 'If the leading Presbyterians in the Assembly and city had come to a temper with the Independents, on the footing of a limited toleration, they had in all likelihood prevented the disputes between the army and parliament, which were the ruin of both; they might then have saved the constitution, and made their own terms with the king; but they were enchanted with the beauties of *covenant uniformity*, and the Divine right of Presby-

[m] Neal, iii. ch. vi. pp. 310, 311.
[n] Crosby, i. p. 188.
[o] p. 73.
[p] ib. 190.

tery, which, after all, the parliament would not admit in its full extent.'[q]

It required, indeed, considerable enlargement of mind, to examine impartially the causes of the confusion of practice and conflict of opinion, which were then operating on the country. Few were capable of looking through the tempest which was then howling, to a period of peace which would certainly follow; when the novelty of liberty should subside into the enjoyment of its sweets; and when the ebullitions of party should give place to 'quietness and assurance for ever.' Milton took the true view of the state of the country, when he exclaimed, in all the felicity of the poet and the fervour of the patriot, 'Methinks I see a noble and puissant nation rousing herself, like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her, as an eagle, muing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.'[r]

We have no reason to think that Owen ever approved of the sentiments and spirit of the body with which he was, to appearance, for a time connected. It seems rather probable that its violent temper tended to shake any attachment he ever had to it. The moderation of his views, even while a Presbyterian, appeared in the next production of his pen, and which was published not long after his settlement in Fordham: this was 'The Duty of Pastors and People distinguished, touching the administration of things commanded in Religion, especially concerning the means to be used by the people of God, distinct from Church Officers, for the increasing of Divine knowledge in themselves and others,' &c. 4to, pp. 56, 1644.[s] Though it has the date of 1644, it was published in 1643. It is dedicated to his 'Truly noble and ever honoured friend, Sir Edward Scot of Scots

[q] Neal, iii. ch. vi. pp. 309, 310. [r] Areopagitica, Works, p. 393. Ed. 1697.
[s] Works, vol. xix. p. 1.

Hall, in Kent, Knight of the honourable order of the Bath.' In the dedication he tells Sir Edward that he had published it in consequence of the solicitations of some judicious men who were acquainted with its contents; and thanks him for many favours, and especially for the free 'proffer of an ecclesiastical preferment, then vacant, and in his donation;' but which circumstances had prevented him from accepting. I know nothing of Sir Edward Scot, but Owen makes most honourable mention of him in this address. From one passage it would seem that he had been some time in Sir Edward's family; and as it does credit to the worthy Knight, and shews something of the troubled state of the country, it is worth quoting. 'Twice, by God's providence, have I been with you when your county has been in great danger to be ruined; once by the horrid insurrection of a rude, godless multitude; and again by the invasion of a potent enemy prevailing in the neighbour county. At both which times, besides the general calamity justly feared, particular threatenings were daily brought to you. Under which sad dispensations, I must crave leave to say, that I never saw more resolved constancy, or more cheerful, unmoved Christian carriage in any man.'

His object in this treatise is to steer a middle course between those who ascribed too much power to ministers, and those who gave too much to the people. 'Some,' says he, 'would have all Christians to be almost ministers, others none but ministers to be God's clergy: those would give the people the keys, these use them to lock them out of the church. The one ascribing to them primarily all ecclesiastical power for the ruling of the congregation, the other abridging them of the performance of spiritual duties, for the building of their own souls. As though there were no habitable earth between the valley, I had almost said, the pit of democratical confusion, and the precipitous rock of hierarchical tyranny.'[t] His design, therefore, is to shew how 'The sacred calling may retain its ancient dignity, though the people of God be not deprived of their Christian liberty.'[u]

In prosecuting this discussion he declares himself to be of 'the belief of that form of church government, which is

[t] Works, vol. xix. p. 8. [u] Ibid.

commonly called Presbyterial, in opposition to Prelatical on the one side, and that which is commonly called Independent on the other.' He was then, as appears from what we have already quoted, very ignorant of Independency, but was more nearly allied to it in sentiment than he himself knew. Hence referring afterwards to this very tract he says, 'Upon a review of what I had there asserted, I found that my principles were more suited to what is the judgment and practice of the Congregational men, than those of the Presbyterian. Only, whereas I had not received any farther clear information in these ways of the worship of God, which since I have been engaged in, I professed myself of the Presbyterian judgment, in opposition to democratical confusion; and, indeed, so I do still, and so do all the Congregational men in England that I am acquainted with. So that when I compare what I then wrote with my present judgment, I am scarce able to find the least difference between the one and the other; only a misapplication of names and things by me, gives countenance to this charge.'[x]

An examination of the tract itself confirms this view of it. It is very different from the Reformed Pastor of Baxter, or the Pastoral Care of Burnet. Both these small works, which contain much important matter, are occupied with stating and enforcing the duties of ministers; while Owen's is devoted to pointing out the rights and duties of the people. The greater part of it is employed in preliminary disquisition respecting the condition of the people of God before the coming of Christ; so that it is only towards the end of it, that he treats of their duty now, in extraordinary and ordinary circumstances. Without seeming to advocate *lay preaching*, he argues from various considerations, that 'truth revealed to any carries along with it an immoveable persuasion of conscience, that it ought to be published and spoken to others.' From Acts viii. 1—4. he says it appears 'that all the *faithful members* of the church, being thus dispersed, went everywhere preaching the word, having no warrant, but the general engagement of all Christians to further the propagation of Christ's kingdom.' In extraordinary or peculiar circumstances, therefore, he con-

[x] Works, vol. xix. p. 273.

tends that it is the duty of every man to make known as extensively as possible, the portion of truth with which he is acquainted. In ordinary circumstances he maintains, that it is the duty of the people of God, 'for the improving of knowledge, the increasing of charity, and the furtherance of that holy communion that ought to be among the brethren, of their own accord to assemble together, to consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works, to stir up the gifts that are in them, yielding and receiving mutual consolation by the fruits of their most holy faith.' He endeavours to shew that such practices soberly conducted, are not interferences with the pastoral office; but ought to be encouraged by all the servants of Jesus Christ, as much calculated to promote the progress of knowledge and holiness. While he every where discovers sufficient respect for the institution of the gospel ministry, there is none of that selfish and narrow jealousy of encroachment upon its rights; none of that morbid fear of its honour and dignity;—none of that supercilious treatment of the people —the *Laity*, which have so frequently been discovered by men in office, and which savour more of the pride of power, and the spirit of corporation, than the liberality of Christianity, and disinterested zeal for the salvation of men.

In the course of this Treatise, Owen mentions twice a Latin tract, 'De sacerdotio Christi contra Armin. Socin. et Papistas.' Besides treating of the priesthood of Christ, it seems to have been intended as an answer to the views of the Dutch Remonstrants on Liberty of Prophesying. This production was designed, at first, for the satisfaction of a few private friends, and was, he tells us, 'nondum edito,' when he published his Duties of Pastor and People. Nor does it appear to have been ever published; as before this could take place, his mind underwent an important change on the subject of religious liberty. As every thing on this subject is interesting, the candid avowal of his change of sentiment on this important topic, contained in the following passage, is worthy of attention:—

'I remember about fifteen years ago, that meeting with a learned friend, we fell into some debate about the liberty that began then to be claimed by men, differing from what had been (Episcopacy), and what was then likely to be es-

tablished (Presbytery); having, at that time, made no farther inquiry into the grounds and reasons of such liberty, than what had occurred to me in the writings of the Remonstrants—I delivered my judgment in *opposition to the liberty* pleaded for, which was then defended by my learned friend. Not many years after, discoursing the same difference with the same person, we found immediately that we had changed stations; I pleading for an indulgence of liberty, he for restraint. Whether that learned and worthy person be of the same mind that then he was, I know not directly. My change I here own; my judgment is not the same in this particular that it was fourteen years ago, and in my change, I have good company, whom I need not name. I shall only say, it was at least twelve years before the Petition and Advice,[z] wherein the Parliament of the three nations is come up to my judgment.'[a]

This passage exhibits the openness and candour of Owen in a very interesting light; and also shews that his changes did not follow, but precede the revolutions of public opinion. It must have been no small gratification to him to see his sentiments afterwards embraced by so large and enlightened a portion of the community. And it is gratifying to the biographer of Owen to have it in his power to state, that the changes of sentiment and progress of public opinion during more than a century and a half since Owen's alteration, so far from detecting the mistakes, or exposing the danger of his sentiments, have only more fully elucidated their importance, and established their truth beyond controversy, and he trusts, also, beyond danger.

Previously to Owen's introduction to the parish of Fordham, the parish itself, and the surrounding country, had been exceedingly neglected. Immediately, therefore, on obtaining the living, he set himself most resolutely to correct the evils in which it was immersed. Publicly, and privately, he appears to have laboured for the people's good. Among other means which he employed, was that of catechising them from house to house; a mode of instruction peculiarly adapted to their condition, and which

[z] The Petition and Advice were presented to Parliament in 1657. So that Owen's change of sentiment about religious liberty, must have taken place in, or about, 1645.

[a] Preface to Defence of Cotton against Cawdry, Works, vol. xix. p. 367; published in 1658.

has often been blessed to the souls of men. To enable him more effectually to prosecute this plan, in the end of the year 1645, he published, "The Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, unfolded in two short Catechisms; wherein those principles of religion are explained, the knowledge whereof is required by the late ordinance of Parliament, before any be admitted to the Lord's Supper.' 12mo. pp. 60.[b] The first part of this small production he calls the lesser Catechism, intended for young persons, and to be committed to memory; the second, the greater Catechism, designed for the instruction of the grown up people, and to assist them in instructing their families. They are both tolerably simple, and on the whole, well adapted to the purpose for which they were prepared.

The Address to his 'Loving Neighbours and Christian Friends,' discovers the deep anxiety he felt for their spiritual welfare, and notices some of the means he had employed to promote it. 'My heart's desire and request unto God for you is, that ye may be saved: I say the truth in Christ also, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness, and continual sorrow in my heart, for them amongst you, who as yet walk disorderly. and not as beseemeth the gospel, little labouring to acquaint themselves with the mystery of godliness. You know, brethren, how I have been amongst you, and in what manner, for these few years past; and how I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you; but have shewed you and taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying to all repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. With what sincerity this hath been by me performed, with what issue and success by you received, God, the righteous Judge, will one day declare. In the mean time, the desire of my heart is, to be servant to the least of you in the work of the Lord; and that in any way, which I can conceive profitable unto you, either in your persons or your families.' This language shews how much he was in earnest about his work, and discovers the same spiritual and benevolent mind, which he cultivated and maintained to the end of his course.

Both Catechisms are strictly of a doctrinal nature: the

[b] Works, vol. v. p. 3.

omission of moral duties he explains, by declaring his intention to publish, in a short time, an Exposition of the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, with the Articles of the Creed, in the same form. Before this intention could be executed, however, he was either removed from Fordham, or his mind had undergone a change which prevented the fulfilment of his promise.

The fame of Owen was now beginning to extend, which occasioned his being called to appear in a wider field of labour and influence. On the twenty-ninth of April, 1646, being the day of the monthly fast, observed by Parliament, he was appointed to preach before that august assembly. The sermon, which was published by command of the House, and for which he received its thanks, by Mr. Fenner, and Sir Peter Wentworth, was founded on Acts xvi. 9., and is entitled, 'A vision of unchangeable free mercy, in sending the means of grace to undeserving sinners.'[c] It contains a great variety of matter, and toward the end an earnest expostulation about the destitute state of Wales, and some other parts of the country. 'When manna fell in the wilderness from the hand of the Lord,' he exclaims, 'every one had an equal share. I would there were not now too great an inequality, when in the hand of man. Some have all, and others none; some sheep daily picking the choice flowers of every pasture, others wandering upon the barren mountains, without guide or food.'

His dedication of the sermon to the long Parliament is in Latin, and on account of the high eulogium which it pronounces on that body, deserves to be here introduced. 'Amplissimo Senatui, &c. &c. To the most noble Senate, the most renowned assembly of England;—most deservedly celebrated through the whole world, and to be held in everlasting remembrance by all the inhabitants of this island;—for strenuously, and faithfully, asserting the rights of Englishmen;—for recovering the liberty of their country, almost ruined by the base attempts of some;—for administering justice boldly, equally, moderately, impartially;—for dissolving the power of a hierarchical tyranny in ecclesiastical affairs, and abolishing the popish newly invented antichristian rites;—for restoring the privileges of the Christian people;—for enjoying the powerful preserv-

[c] Works, vol. xv. p. 5.

ation of the Most High in all these, and in innumerable other things in council and war, at home and abroad :—To the illustrious, honourable, select Gentlemen of the Commons in Parliament assembled, this Discourse, humble, indeed, in its pretensions; but being preached before them by their desire, is now by their command published,' &c.

It must be acknowledged that this is not ordinary praise. But when we consider the conduct of the long Parliament till this period; how natural it was for a lover of liberty, justice, and religion, to view all its conduct in the most favourable light; and the admissions even of its enemies in its favour; the language of Owen will occasion less surprise. Lord Clarendon acknowledges, 'that there were many great and worthy patriots in the House, and as eminent as any age had ever produced; men of gravity, of wisdom, and of large and plentiful fortunes.' Hume, almost in the words of Owen, calls it a 'famous Assembly, which had filled all Europe with the renown of its actions.' After this, it will not excite wonder that Milton should praise its 'illustrious exploits against the breast of tyranny, and the prosperous issue of its noble and valorous counsels.' Without bestowing unlimited or indiscriminate approbation, it may be safely affirmed, that it comprehended many whose stern integrity, and high independence of mind, would have done honour to the proudest periods of Roman glory; and that many of its measures have never been excelled in the wisdom with which they were framed, the boldness with which they were advocated, or the intrepidity and perseverance with which they were executed.

But the chief value of Owen's discourse now, is the assistance it affords us in tracing the progress of his mind, on some of the subjects which then agitated the country, and at which we have already glanced. From the Sermon, and a 'Country Essay for the practice of Church Government' annexed to it, it appears that though he still remained in the Presbyterian body, it could scarcely be said that he was of it. The discourse itself contains his decided disapprobation of the views and spirit of many in that profession. 'They are,' he says, 'disturbed in their optics, or having got false glasses, all things are represented to them in dubious colours. Which way soever

they look, they can see nothing but errors, errors of all sizes, sorts, sects, and sexes, from beginning to end; which have deceived some men, not of the worst, and made them think, that all before was nothing, in comparison of the present confusion.' Referring to the same thing in the Essay, he says: 'Once more, conformity is grown the touchstone amongst the greatest part of men, however otherwise of different persuasions. Dissent is the only crime, and where that is all that is culpable, it shall be made all that is so.'

About this time it appears that he had much discussion with the ministers of the county of Essex, on the subject of Church Government. This occasioned his being very variously represented, and led him at the suggestion of others to put together, in a great hurry, his thoughts on Church Government, and publish them with his sermon. The substance of it had a good while before been circulated in manuscript; and the great object of it is to try to unite both parties—the Presbyterian and Independent; or, at least, to moderate their warmth. While he professes to belong to, or hold some of the principles of the former, he, at the same time, explicitly declares, 'that he knew no church government in the world, already established, of the truth and necessity of which he was in all particulars convinced.' The details of the plan, however, contain more of Independency than of the other system; perhaps, as much of it as could be acted on, along with obedience to Parliamentary injunctions. He intimates also his conviction that 'all *national disputes* about Church Government would prove birthless tympanies.'

The tract contains an explicit declaration of his sentiments on two important subjects,—the folly and uselessness of contention about uniformity, and the necessity and importance of toleration. He protests against giving men odious appellations, on account of their religious sentiments; and exposes the absurdity of that species of exaggeration in which both parties then indulged. 'Our little differences may be met at every stall, and in too many pulpits, swelled by unbefitting expressions to such a formidable bulk, that poor creatures are startled at their horrid looks and appearance; while our own persuasions are set

out in silken words and gorgeous apparel, as if we sent them into the world a-wooing. Hence, whatever it is, it must be temple-building,—God's government,—Christ's sceptre, throne, kingdom,—the only way—that for want of which, errors, heresies, sins, spring among us; plagues, judgments, punishments, come upon us. Such big words as these have made us believe, that we are mortal adversaries, that one kingdom, communion, heaven, cannot hold us.' He had given great offence by refusing, it appears, to subscribe petitions to Parliament about Church Government, for which he assigns very satisfactory reasons: but which shew that he was far alienated from the religious party then in power.

On the subject of toleration he had made great advances, though he had not yet arrived at the maturity of his sentiments on this subject. 'Toleration,' he says, 'is the alms of authority, yet men who beg for it think so much at least their due. I never knew one contend earnestly for a toleration of dissenters who was not one himself; nor any for their suppression, who were not themselves of the persuasion which prevaileth.' He does not, however, maintain the necessity of a universal toleration; and yet when his limitations come to be examined, and the means he would employ in repressing error, and supporting truth, attended to, his views are, on the whole, highly enlightened and liberal. He uses some strong language about the iniquity of putting men to death for heresy, declaring that he 'had almost said, it would be for the interest of morality to consent generally to the persecution of a man maintaining such a destructive opinion.' 'I know,' says he, 'the usual pretences for persecution,—"such a thing is blasphemy:" but search the Scriptures, look at the definitions of divines, and you will find heresy, in what head of religion soever it be, and blasphemy very different.—"To spread such errors will be destructive to souls:" so are many things which yet are not punishable with death; let him that thinks so, go kill Pagans and Mahometans.—"Such a heresy is a canker:" but it is a spiritual one, let it be prevented by spiritual means; cutting off men's heads is no proper remedy for it. If state physicians think otherwise, I say no more, but that I am not of the college.'

There is a prodigious contrast between these sentiments, and those of the Presbyterian writers quoted in this chapter. Their violence and illiberality appear more dreadful and improper, when brought into contact with the moderation and liberality of Owen. His mind was rapidly maturing in the knowledge of the great principles of civil and religious freedom; by advocating which he was destined to acquire to himself a distinguished reputation, and to confer on his country a most invaluable boon. He was already in the career of discovery advanced considerably beyond most men of his time.—Undismayed by the collisions and disorders which seemed to arise out of the enjoyment of liberty, his generous soul exulted in the important blessing, and confidently anticipated from it the most glorious ultimate results. Satisfied that the cause of God required not the support of man's puny arm, or the vengeance of his wrath, he fearlessly committed it to him who has engaged to preserve it, and who hath said, 'To me belongeth vengeance, I will repay.'

On a report that the sequestered incumbent of Fordham was dead, the patron presented another to the living, and dispossessed Owen. From this it would appear that in such cases, the parliamentary presentations did not permanently interfere with the rights of the patron; and that a person presented in the room of one who was ejected for insufficiency, held the parish only during the life of the sequestered minister. With the loss of Fordham terminated Owen's connexion with the Presbyterians; for which, his mind had been for some time in a state of preparation.

Every change of religious sentiment is important to the person who makes it, and ought to be gone into with cautious deliberation. To be given to change is a great evil, and indicates a weak and unsettled mind. On the other hand, to be afraid of change is frequently the result of indifference to truth, or of sinful fear of consequences. It is the duty of every Christian to follow the teaching of the Spirit in the word of revelation, and to recollect that for his convictions he must be accountable at last. The attempt to smother them is always improper; and when successful, must injure the religious feelings of their subject. To allow hopes or fears of a worldly nature to over-

come our persuasion of what the word of God requires, is to forget the important intimation of our Lord,—that, if any thing is loved more than Himself, it is impossible to be his disciple. By such conduct the tribulations of the kingdom may often be avoided, but the consolations and rewards of it will also be lost. 'If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; If any man serve me, him will my Father honour.'

CHAP. III.

Owen's settlement at Coggeshall—View of Independency—The Brownists—Causes which retarded and promoted the progress of Independency in England—Owen becomes an Independent—Publishes Eshcol—A Treatise on Redemption—His views on this subject—Controversy occasioned by it—Publishes two Discourses on the deliverance of Essex—Remarks on some sentiments contained in them.

OWEN'S deprivation of Fordham was attended with no loss, either of a pecuniary or spiritual nature. As soon as the people of Coggeshall, which is only about five miles distant from Fordham, heard of it, they sent him a pressing invitation to become their minister; to which the Earl of Warwick, the patron, immediately acceded by presenting him with the living. Coggeshall is a considerable market town in Essex, about forty-five miles distant from London, and was once a manufacturing place of some note. The church, which is still standing, is a spacious and lofty edifice, dedicated to St. Peter; and the pulpit in which Owen preached, though not now used, yet remains.

His immediate predecessors in this place were John and Obadiah Sedgwick, brothers, who successively occupied this charge. They were respectable Presbyterian ministers, and authors of various works, which were then extensively read. The latter, whom Owen succeeded, was a member of the Assembly; he became preacher at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, 1646; was in 1653 appointed one of the Tryers, and died at Marlborough, his native place, to which he had retired, after resigning all his preferments, in 1658.

Coggeshall afforded Owen a more extensive field of use-

fulness than he had enjoyed at Fordham. The congregation consisted of nearly two thousand persons; who were generally sober, religious, and intelligent. Between him and them a very intimate and ardent attachment soon took place, which was productive of much mutual satisfaction. His ministry was attended with considerable success; and nothing, probably, but circumstances which he could not control, would have removed him from this beloved flock. It was here, that he began to act as an Independent or Congregationalist, by forming a church on the principles of that profession. Before stating the circumstances which led to Owen's uniting himself with this body of Christians (as these Memoirs embrace his religious connexions), it will not, I trust, be deemed a digression to give a brief sketch of its sentiments, and an outline of its early history to the period of his joining it.

The distinguishing principle of Independency may be expressed in a single sentence; viz. That a church of Christ is a voluntary society of Christians, regularly assembling in one place, and with its officers possessing the full power of government, worship, and discipline in itself. As a *voluntary* society no man can, or ought to be compelled to join it; nor can it be compelled by external authority to receive, or retain, any individual in its communion. As a *Christian* society those only are fit to enjoy its privileges, who appear to have believed the truth, imbibed the spirit, and submitted to the authority of Christ. To admit persons of a different description, must tend to defeat the object of its association, which is entirely of a spiritual nature, and to introduce corruption and disorder. It is a regular, and not an ambulatory or occasional assembly. For conducting its spiritual offices, bishops or pastors are appointed; and deacons or servants, to manage its few temporal concerns. Without persons suitably qualified for these duties, and conscientiously discharging them, its constitution must be imperfect, and all its procedure will be marked with irregularity and disorder. It has the power of conducting its worship in such a manner, as may, consistently with the Scriptures, tend most to general edification. In its government and discipline, it is accountable to the Great Head of the church; but not to any other tribunal. This view of

the character and constitution of a church, is presumed to be characterized by that simplicity which distinguishes every arrangement in the kingdom of Christ; to be adapted to the endlessly diversified circumstances in which Christianity may be placed in the world; to answer every purpose of religious association; and to be supported by the general principles, the particular precepts, or the recorded example of the apostles and primitive believers. A society of this description can be governed only by the authority of the word of God, cannot be compelled to receive for doctrines the commandments of men, and never can admit of alliance with, or incorporation into a temporal kingdom. It is our object to state, not to advocate, at present, the principles of Independency. Among its friends there have been diversities of judgment on minor points, but every consistent Independent has held substantially the sentiments above expressed.

That this was the constitution of the primitive churches, for at least the two first centuries of the Christian era, others, as well as Independents, have successfully shewn.[a] It appears gradually to have merged in a species of Episcopacy, and was finally swallowed up with every thing valuable in Christianity, in the vortex of papal abomination. The constitution of the church was among the last subjects the Reformers were likely to study, and, from their peculiar circumstances, the one they were most likely to misunderstand. Believing, as they did, that Christianity could scarcely exist without state patronage, and that conscience might be the subject of human legislation, the simple form of Independency was not likely to occur to them, or if it did occur, would be speedily rejected as unsuitable to the state of the church, and of the world.

As far as a name can fasten reproach, it has often been attempted to render the Independents odious by tracing their origin to Robert Brown; who, after having professed the sentiments of the body, and suffered grievously for them, returned to the bosom of the church of England, and died miserably at a very advanced age.[b] Although Brown

[a] Mosheim's Commentaries on the affairs of the Christians before the time of Constantine, vol. i. pp. 263—267; translated by Vidal. Campbell's Lectures on Ecclesiastical Hist. i. lect. vi. et passim. Owen's Inquiry, &c. chap. v.

[b] Fuller's Ch. Hist. book ix. pp. 167—169. Baillie's Dissuasive, pp. 13—15.

was, for a time, a very zealous defender of this form of ecclesiastical polity, there is no reason for ascribing to him, either the merit or the disgrace of originating it. Long before he was heard of, perhaps before he was born, there were persons in England who held and acted on these sentiments, as far as was practicable in their circumstances. Bolton, though not the first in this way, was an elder of a separate church in the beginning of queen Elizabeth's days.[c] George Gyffard, minister of God's word at Maldon, who published in 1590 his 'Plain Declaration that our Brownists be full Donatists,' says, 'Many men think that they be sprung up but of late; but whereas, in very deed, it is well known, that there was a church of them in London twenty years past.' Brown's publications first appeared at Middleburgh, in 1582; but twelve years before this, according to Gyffard, there was a church in London. John Smyth said in 1609, 'Popery had the prescription of a thousand years against Calvin; but Calvin had not had the prescription of one hundred years against the separation—nay, I suppose not above fifty years.' Calvin was born in 1509; fifty years added to this brings us to 1560, which was the second year of Elizabeth's reign. Penry, in his address to Queen Elizabeth, says, 'If we had Queen Mary's days, I think we should have been as flourishing a church at this day as ever any; for it is well known that there were then in London, and elsewhere in exile, more flourishing churches than any tolerated by your authority.'[d] In the year 1567, a number of persons were imprisoned belonging to a society of about a hundred, who appear to have been of this persuasion.[e] In a speech made by Sir Walter Raleigh in the House of Commons, 1692, on a law to transport the Brownists; he observes, 'If two or three thousand Brownists meet at the sea-side, at whose charge shall they be transported? Or whither will you send them? I am sorry for it, but I am afraid there are near twenty thousand of them in England; and when they are gone, who shall maintain their wives and children?'[f] If their number was such at this date, they must have been in the country many years before. These testimonies satisfactorily prove, that Ro-

[c] Robinson's Justification, p. 50. [d] Brook's Lives, Art. Penry, vol. ii. p. 51.
[e] Ibid. Art. Hawkins, vol. i. pp. 133—149. [f] Townshend's Historical Col. p. 176.

bert Brown was not the founder of this religious sect; and that it must have existed in England at no distant period from the Reformation.

The Brownists, as they have been nicknamed, were treated with great severity both by Churchmen and Nonconformists. They were the first consistent dissenters from the Church of England, though they undoubtedly carried some things farther than moderate men in moderate times would approve. There were a few forward fiery spirits among them, who expressed themselves with too much asperity of others. This produced discord among themselves, and exposed them to the vengeance of their adversaries; who, with an equal want of religion and humanity, gloried over their faults, and insulted their misfortunes. In palliation of their real or supposed improprieties, however, much may be said. They were placed in circumstances entirely new, and had no experience in the mode of managing the principles they had adopted. They were surrounded by enemies, whose conduct often tended to inflame and exasperate, but seldom to enlighten or convince. The evils they had endured from a worldly persecuting hierarchy, drove them to the farthest length they could go in opposition to it. Some of them were men of learning, and the body of them men of principle, who rejoiced to be counted worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ. The names of Ainsworth, Canne, and Robinson, will always be cherished with respect by the lovers of sacred literature; and the souls of Copping and Thacker, Greenwood and Barrow, Penry and Dennis, are now before the altar above, for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Men who suffered the loss of all things for conscience' sake, and who loved not their lives unto death, ought not to be wantonly reproached: and it especially ill becomes those who belong to a community, which arose out of the ashes of Brownism, and which profited by its mistakes and its sufferings, to join with others in ridiculing or defaming it. It ought to be recollected too, that the chief accounts which we have of the Brownists are from the pens of their adversaries. Such testimony should always be received with caution; and when we perceive the vituperation, indecency, and palpable injustice, which prevail

in many of the publications issued against this much hated sect, we must conclude that such authorities as Paget and Edwards, and even those of Baillie and Hall, are not entitled to implicit deference.

Such as they were, the principles of this body obtained considerable publicity before the end of the sixteenth century. A variety of spirited pamphlets, chiefly anonymous, were published by members of it; and churches were formed, which met mostly in private, till by the Act of 1593, those who survived the effects of dungeons and gibbets, were condemned to indiscriminate banishment. The greater part of them retired to Holland, then the land of liberty, and in Rotterdam, Middleburgh, Leyden, Amsterdam, and Arnheim, were permitted to constitute churches according to their own model. There, in 1596, they published a Confession of their Faith, in Latin and English, and addressed it to the Continental and British Universities. Their conduct in Holland seems to have been in general very exemplary, till most of them removed to New England, and founded that flourishing colony; into which they introduced those enlightened principles of religious liberty which have obtained so firm an establishment in America.

John Robinson, who was educated at Cambridge, and beneficed near Yarmouth, with some of his people, renounced their connexion with the Church of England, and removed to Holland, where he became pastor of the Congregational Church, at Leyden, about 1609. So great was the number of English exiles at this place, that the church at one time consisted of three hundred members. According to the testimony of friends and enemies, Robinson was a learned, amiable, and devoted servant of Christ, and the church under him seems to have merited and enjoyed a high Christian character.[s]

While Robinson was at Leyden, Henry Jacob, another English exile, of eminent learning and talents, was pastor of the church at Middleburgh. These two excellent men, assisted by the celebrated Dr. William Ames, better known by his Latin name Amesius (who had filled with distin-

[s] Prince's Chron. Hist. i. p. 32. Morton's New Eng. Mem. p. 2. Baillie's Diss. p. 17.

guished reputation, for many years, the Divinity Chair of Franeker, and afterwards became joint pastor of the Congregational Church at Rotterdam, and colleague to the unfortunate Hugh Peters), adopted those views of fellowship and Government which have since distinguished the body of British Independents.[h]

Various circumstances concurred to induce Mr. Jacob to return to his native country about 1616; where he immediately set about forming a church in London, on Congregational principles. This is generally thought to have been the first Church of this description in England; but Edwards asserts that the Church at Duckenfield, in Cheshire, was formed before any of the exiles came over from Holland. When we reflect how extensively these principles were disseminated through England, it is probable that in many parts of it there were persons ready to embrace the first opportunity of reducing to practice the sentiments which they had previously received.

It may well be supposed that the progress of the Independent Churches, during the despotic reigns of James and Charles, must have been very slow. In general they were obliged to meet privately, and even then, were liable to frequent and violent interruptions. Mr. Jacob's church in London, however, seems to have enjoyed a continuity of existence through the greater part of this period, and was favoured with the labours of a succession of excellent men. Mr. Jacob himself continued pastor till 1624, when, with the consent of the Church, he removed to Virginia. He was succeeded by Mr. John Lathorp, who remained pastor till 1636, when the oppressions of the times drove him and a number of the church, to take refuge in America. His successor was Mr. Henry Jessey, who continued in office till the time of which we are now writing.[i]

Various causes combined after 1640, to promote the increase and respectability of the Independent body throughout England. The state of the country became favourable to freedom of inquiry on religious subjects. A very general disgust prevailed towards Episcopacy, which had been long excited by the conduct both of the church and

[h] Brook's Lives, articles Robinson, Jacob, Ames.
[i] Wilson's Hist. of the Diss. Churches, i. pp. 36—43.

the court. Respect for old established forms and received opinions, rapidly gave way; and the minds of men received an impulse, which in many instances, no doubt, led to error and extravagance; but was, on the whole, favourable to the progress of truth. The influence of error is never so destructive as when its subjects are in a state of torpor and unconcern. The wildness of fanaticism, and the uproar of persecution, are not so unfavourable to the march of knowledge, as the gloomy security of a bigoted superstition. In the one case, amidst much evil, some good will appear; in the other, the whole mass is sunk in hopeless and deathlike apathy.

The return, at this time, of many individuals from Holland, where they had been long exiled on account of their religious sentiments, excited attention to Congregational principles. Many of them who had left England chiefly from dissatisfaction with the forms and spirit of Episcopacy, had in Holland become Independents. This change had been effected not so much by the zeal of the party previously settled there, as by the opportunity afforded during their residence in that country, to study the Scriptures unbiassed by the influence of an established system, and freed from all temptations of a worldly nature. Such at least is the account given of their change by Goodwin, Nye, Burroughs, Simpson, and Bridge, in their celebrated Apologetical Narrative, presented to the Westminster Assembly. The return of such persons, and their influence among their former friends and flocks, must have created a considerable sensation.

By this time too, the Congregational cause had obtained a firm footing in New England, and churches were there growing up and flourishing under its auspices. American pamphlets were imported, which disseminated the sentiments of the churches in that quarter. Thus the heresy, which had been expelled from England, returned with the increased strength of a transatlantic cultivation, and the publications of Cotton and Hooker, Norton and Mather, were circulated through England, and, during this writing and disputing period, produced a mighty effect.

Another thing which contributed greatly to the spread of Independency was the meeting and transactions of the

Westminster Assembly. This celebrated body met by appointment of Parliament on the first of July 1643, and continued to meet with more or less of regularity till the twenty-second of February 1648-9: having held eleven hundred and sixty-three sessions during that time. It consisted of a number of Ministers and Laymen, of various classes, chosen by Parliament to assist by counsel and advice, but invested with no power or authority. It was nearly of one mind on doctrinal subjects; but of very different sentiments on church government and discipline. Some were decided Episcopalians; a few were Erastians, who had no fixed sentiments on these subjects; the body at the beginning were moderate Conformists, but, pushed on by the Scots commissioners, would at last be satisfied with nothing short of the Divine right of Presbytery, and a Covenanted uniformity. Ten or twelve members were wholly or partially Independents.[k] The character of the Assembly has been variously represented. Without all question it comprised a large portion of religion and learning; while its proceedings were often marked with those imperfections which uniformly attach to all Assemblies of uninspired men. The debates which occurred in this body on the subject of government and discipline, called forth the strength both of the Presbyterians and the Independents on all the leading questions in which the two systems differ. Many and long were the discussions which, both in writing and by speech, took place; in which, as might be expected, the Independents were invariably out-voted; but in which it will not be supposed that an Independent will admit that they were out-reasoned. The leaders of the Independent party were men of as profound learning, talents, and piety as any of whom the opposite side could boast; and their invincible

[k] The names of these persons were:—

Thos. Goodwin,	Peter Sterry,
Philip Nye,	William Carter,
Jer. Burroughs,	Joseph Caryl,
Sydrach Simpson,	John Dury,
William Bridge,	John Philips,
William Greenhill,	William Strong.

The first five on this list went by the name of the Dissenting Brethren, as they generally took the lead in the public discussions, and were mostly employed in drawing up the printed papers. There were above one hundred Ministers in the Assembly, which sufficiently explains the reason why the Independents were usually out-voted.

patience, considering the opposition they had to encounter, deserves to be honourably mentioned. Truth never suffers from discussion. The publication of the Assembly's debates, and the pamphlets which they occasioned, diffused information on the disputed points, and increased the number of dissenters from Presbytery and Episcopacy.

Whatever is due to these causes, it would be wrong to ascribe the progress of Independency entirely to their influence. There was another—the most important of the whole; but in stating which I must borrow the words of others, to escape the charge of partiality. 'The rapid progress of the Independents,' says the impartial Mosheim, 'was no doubt owing to a variety of causes; among which justice obliges us to reckon the learning of their teachers, and the regularity and sanctity of their manners.'[l] This candid admission of Mosheim is corroborated by the testimony of Baxter, who was very far from being a friend to Independents. 'I saw,' says he, 'that most of them were zealous, and very many learned, discreet and godly men, and fit to be very serviceable in the Church.—Also, I saw a commendable care of *serious holiness and discipline* in most of the Independent Churches.'[m]

Such were some of the causes, which promoted the increase and respectability of this body, shortly before Owen connected himself with it. It was neither its number nor its respectability, however, which produced his adoption of its sentiments, as will immediately appear. The following account is given by Baillie of its state in 1646, the very time at which Owen joined it. It partakes of the colouring of that writer's party prejudices; but is on the whole by no means discreditable to the Independents, though he ascribes to political management what may be more easily accounted for from the operation of the causes already enumerated.

'Of all the bye-paths wherein the wanderers of our time are pleased to walk, this is the most considerable; not for the number, but for the quality of the erring persons. There be few of the noted sects which are not a great deal more numerous; but this way what it wants in number, supplies by the weight of its followers. After five years' endeavours and great industry, within the lines of the city's communi-

[l] Ch. History, cent xvii. sect. ii. part ii. [m] Baxter's own Life, part ii. p. 140.

cation, they are said as yet to consist of much within one thousand persons—men, women, and all who to this day have put themselves in any known congregation of that way being reckoned. But setting aside number, for other respects they are of so eminent a condition, that not any nor all the rest of the sects are comparable to them: for they have been so wise as to engage to their party some of chief note in both houses of Parliament, in the Assembly of divines, in the Army, in the city and country committees; all whom they daily manage with such dexterity and diligence for the benefit of their cause, that the eyes of the world begin to fall upon them more than upon all their fellows.'[n]

'Contrary,' says a Scots Historian, 'to the progress of other sects, the Independent system was first addressed, and apparently recommended by its tolerating principles, to the higher orders of social life. It was in the progressive state of the sect, when in danger from the persecuting spirit of the Presbyterians, that it descended to the lower classes of the community, where other sectaries begin their career.'[o]

The Presbyterian interest was about this time rather declining. This arose chiefly from its extreme violence, and inveterate hostility to the toleration of all other parties. The people of England were not generally prepared to enforce the uniformity for which it contended; and as nothing else would satisfy, the whole of the other sects, however they differed from each other, agreed and united to resist it. As the Presbyterian cause declined, that of the Independents rose; till in the end, the former struggling for power, entirely lost its influence; and the latter seeking existence, acquired ascendancy.

The progress of Owen's mind on the subject of Church Government has been already noticed. For a time he appears to have hesitated between Presbytery and Independency. It fortunately happens that we can give an account of the circumstances which led to his decided adoption of the latter system in his own words. The following passage is peculiarly important.

'Not long after (the publication of his Duties of Pastor

[n] Dissuasive, p. 53. [o] Laing's Hist. of Scotland, vol. i. p. 275.

and People) I set myself seriously to inquire into the controversies then warmly agitated in these nations. Of the Congregational way I was not acquainted with any one person, minister or other; nor had I to my knowledge seen any more than *one* in my life. My acquaintance lay wholly with ministers and people of the Presbyterian way. But sundry books being published on either side, I perused and compared them with the Scriptures and with one another, according as I received ability from God. After a general view of them, as was my manner in other controversies, I fixed on one to take under peculiar consideration, which seemed most methodically and strongly to maintain that which was contrary, as I thought, to my present persuasion. This was Mr. Cotton's book "Of the Keys." The examination and confutation of which, merely for my own satisfaction, with what diligence and sincerity I was able, I engaged in. What progress I made in that undertaking, I can manifest to any by the discourses on that subject, and animadversions on that book yet abiding by me. *In the pursuit and management of this work, quite beside, and contrary to my expectation, at a time wherein I could expect nothing on that account but ruin in this world, without the knowledge, or advice of, or conference with any one person of that judgment, I was prevailed on to receive those principles to which I had thought to have set myself in opposition.* And indeed this way of impartially examining all things by the word, comparing causes with causes, and things with things, laying aside all prejudiced respects to persons or present traditions, is a course that I would admonish all to beware of, who would avoid the danger of being made Independents.'

In answer to Cawdry's charges of inconsistency, he expresses himself on this subject again as follows:—'Be it here then declared, that whereas I some time apprehended the *Presbyterial,* Synodical Government of Churches, to have been fit to be received and walked in (when I knew not but that it answered those principles which I had taken up, upon my best inquiry into the word of God), I now profess myself to be satisfied that I was then under a mistake; and that I do now own, and have for many years

[p] Review of the nature of Schism, in reply to Cawdry, vol. xix. p. 274.

lived in the way and practice of that called Congregational.'[q]

This language requires no comment; it is a manly and explicit avowal of his change of sentiment, and a candid explanation of the circumstances which led to it. Between the years 1644 and 1646, it appears he had been engaged in examining the constitution and government of the Church. For some time his mind was undecided, but towards the latter part of the above period, he fully adopted those views in which he continued steadfast, and which from time to time, he defended till the end of his life. I have been the more particular on this subject, because every thing relating to the progress of such a mind as Owen's is deserving of attention; because the facts brought forward shew that his change was neither a hasty nor an interested one, but produced entirely by the force of truth and conviction; and, as during the long period of forty years he appeared at the head of his brethren of the Congregational order, it became the more necessary to state how he had been led to embrace their sentiments. As it is also often ignorantly asserted that Owen continued through life a Presbyterian, justice required that his true sentiments should be exhibited. It clearly appears from his own words that he *never* was a Presbyterian; and that at an early period he withdrew from all connexion with that body, from some of whom, as will afterward be shewn, he received no small degree of abuse and ill usage on account of his secession.

The consequence of his change of sentiment was, his forming a church at Coggeshall on Congregational principles, with which he remained till the commonwealth appointments broke up the connexion; but which has continued to the present day in a flourishing state.

Soon after the formation of the Church in this place, he published a small treatise: 'Eshcol: or Rules of Direction for the walking of the saints in fellowship, according to the order of the Gospel,' 1647.[r] It has since gone through many editions. In the preface, he states four principles as the basis of his rules, and in which he considered most persons were agreed who were seeking a scriptural reformation:—

[q] Preface to Cotton's Defence against Cawdry, vol. xix. p. 366.
[r] Works, vol. xix. p. 63.

that particular congregations or assemblies of believers, under officers of their own, are of Divine institution:—that every believer is bound to join himself to some such congregation:—that every man's voluntary consent is required for his union with it:—and that it is convenient that all believers in one place should, unless too numerous, form one congregation. In these principles most Presbyterians as well as Independents would agree. The same remark is applicable to his rules, which are purposely so expressed as to avoid occasion of dispute; and that Christians of every description may derive benefit from them. His sentiments as an Independent, however, appear; for in explaining Matt. xviii. 17. he observes 'that by *church* cannot be understood the Elders of the Church alone, but rather the whole congregation.' It is divided into two parts,—the first on the duty of Members of Churches to their Pastors;—the second on their duty to one another. The former contains seven rules and the latter fifteen: all of them judicious, well supported by Scripture, and calculated to promote, in an eminent degree, the comfort, edification, and usefulness of the Churches of Christ.

Eshcol was followed by a work of deeper learning and research, '*Salus Electorum, Sanguis Jesu;* or the death of Death, in the death of Christ:' 'A treatise of the redemption and reconciliation that is in the blood of Christ, with the merit thereof, and the satisfaction wrought thereby, &c. by John Owen, Pastor of the Church of God which is at Coggeshall, in Essex.' 1648, 4to. pp. 333.[a]

This work is dedicated to the Earl of Warwick, the nobleman to whom he had been indebted for the presentation to Coggeshall: a man of unexceptionable Christian character, and great sweetness of temper; a valuable and steady friend to the persecuted Puritans, and known before, and long after his death, by the distinguished designation of THE GOOD EARL OF WARWICK. It has the attestations of Stanley Gower, and Richard Byfield, Presbyterian ministers of considerable eminence, and members of the Westminster Assembly. They both speak of the work in terms of the highest commendation, though the latter professes to know nothing of Owen, even by name!

[a] Works, vol. v. p. 205.

The work is entirely devoted to an examination of one branch of the Arminian controversy,—the nature and extent of the death of Christ:—a subject of much importance in itself, and the fruitful source of numerous and extended discussions. The subject had occupied the attention of Owen for more than seven years, during which he had examined every thing, written in former or later times on it, which he could procure.[t] The volume, which is the result of this labour, is distinguished by all that comprehension of thought, closeness of reasoning, and minuteness of illustration, which mark the future productions of the author. It is divided into four parts:—In the first, he treats of the eternal purpose, and distinct concurrence of the Father, Son, and Spirit, respecting the work of redemption. In the second, he removes the false and supposed ends of the death of Christ. The third contains arguments against general redemption; and the last answers the objections of Arminians to particular redemption.

In every part of the work, much important and scriptural sentiment occurs; but I am disposed to think that Owen is more successful in the two latter, than in the former parts; in objecting to the sentiments and language of Arminians, than in placing the doctrine of Scripture, on the subject of which he treats, in its true and simple aspect. There is too much minute reasoning on the debtor and creditor hypothesis. For though sin is in Scripture figuratively represented as a debt, it is a moral debt, which cannot be discharged by a payment in kind; but which may be compensated in another way, deemed suitable and satisfactory by the offended party. The atonement of Christ is a glorious expedient devised by infinite wisdom and mercy, to remedy the disorders that have taken place in God's moral government, and to justify his ways to men:—to open the channel of mercy, and to maintain the honours of justice:—to magnify the Lawgiver, and to glorify the Saviour. Some Calvinists maintain that the sacrifice of Christ is, in its nature, as well as design, limited to the elect—to procure the removal of their transgressions, and to obtain for them alone spiritual blessings. Arminians, on the other hand,

[t] Preface.

maintain that the atonement of Christ, in its intention as well as in its nature, extends to all; and that it is chiefly designed to put all mankind into a state capable of being saved. On both sides, there seems to be a confounding of the death of Christ with the purpose of God respecting its extent. The sovereign intention of God in regard to the application of the atonement, is distinct from the atonement itself, though in the Divine plan closely connected with it. The same remedy would have been necessary for the salvation of one sinner, had God so restricted its application; while, in its own nature, it is sufficient to save a thousand worlds, did Jehovah please so to extend and apply it. The sufficiency and suitableness of the remedy arise from the fact—that He is worthy for whose sake the Father forgives and restores to favour the offending rebel. Such is the nature of sin that nothing less than a testimony of infinite displeasure against it, would justify the Lawgiver in shewing mercy to one transgression of even one offender; such is the infinite worth of the sacrifice, arising from the divine character of the sufferer, that it is enough to purge away the transgressions of *all* who believe.

Inattention, on the part of many Calvinists, to the glorious *sufficiency* of the atonement has led to the wildest Antinomianism; while overlooking the sovereign limitation of it, or its applied *efficiency*, has led Arminians to an equally objectionable Neonomianism; or to ascribe salvation, not so much to the death of Christ, as to the sinner's obedience to a new law, which he is enabled to obey by being put, through the work of Christ, into a salvable state. The Calvinists at the Synod of Dort, appear to me to have stated the subject very correctly when they say:—'Christ's satisfaction is of infinite value and price, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of all the world. But the declaration of the gospel is, that whosoever believeth in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have eternal life. Which declaration ought promiscuously and indiscriminately to be announced to all men to whom God, of his good pleasure, sends the gospel; and is to be received by faith and repentance. But that many who are invited by the gospel do neither repent nor believe, but perish in infidelity, arises from no defect or insufficiency in the oblation of Christ on

the cross, but is entirely their own fault.'[u] With these views the following passage of Owen's work fully coincides:—

'It was the purpose of God that his Son should offer a sacrifice of infinite worth and dignity, sufficient in itself for the redeeming of all and every man, if it had pleased the Lord to employ it to that purpose; yea, and of other worlds also, if the Lord should freely make them and would redeem them. This is its own true internal perfection and sufficiency: that it should be applied unto any, made a price for them, and become beneficial to them, is *external* to it, doth not arise from it, but merely depends on the *intention and will of God.*' He proceeds to shew that on this ground the gospel ought to be preached to every creature: 'Because the way of salvation which it declares is wide enough for all to walk in. There is enough in the remedy it brings to light, to heal all their diseases, to deliver them from all their evils: if there were a thousand worlds the gospel might on this ground be preached to them all, if so be they will only believe in him, which is the only way to draw refreshment from this fountain of salvation.'

Were these views of redemption strictly adhered to, which is not done even by Owen himself in this very work, the controversy concerning its extent would be reduced within narrow limits. The ground on which men are called to believe the gospel, is not God's decree of election,—nor the assertion that Christ died for them in particular; but the revealed sufficiency of the atonement for all who believe in it; which is unaffected by any decree of God, and remains the same whether men believe it or not.

Those who would understand the nature of the debate on this subject at an early period, will do well to read the 'Salus Electorum' of Owen; but such as wish to see the modern state of the question, will find, in the masterly reasonings of Dr. Williams in his work on Equity and Sovereignty, and in his Defence of Modern Calvinism, the ablest defence of the views of that part of the Calvinistic scheme which are now generally adopted.

In the course of this work, Owen frequently replies to the language of a treatise on the 'Universality of Free

[u] Acta Synodi Dordrechti, p. 251.

Grace,' by Thomas Moore, who appears to have been an illiterate person; and the same whom Edwards describes as 'a great sectary, that did much hurt in Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and Cambridgeshire; who was famous also in Boston, Lynn, and even Holland; and who was followed from place to place by many.'[x] At the end of the volume also is a short appendix, by way of answer to an undescribed work of Mr. Joshua Sprigge. This gentleman was educated at Oxford, and graduated M. A. at Edinburgh. He must have been a person of some note, as he married in 1673, the widow of Lord Say. He was the author of various works, both political and theological; but to which of them Owen refers in his appendix I have not ascertained.[y]

An answer to this work was published by Mr. John Horne, entitled 'The Open Door for Man's approach to God; or a Vindication of the Record of God, concerning the extent of the Death of Christ, in answer to a Treatise on that subject, by Mr. John Owen,' 1650, 4to. pp. 318. The author was minister at Lynn in Norfolk, from which he was ejected in 1662. He was an Arminian on the subject of Redemption, but not on some of the other points; and is said to have been a holy, excellent man. He wrote a variety, chiefly of controversial pieces, of which a long list is given by Palmer.[z] This reply to Owen treats him very respectfully. In the preface, he says, that he chose to reply to his work rather than any other, on account of Owen's reputation for ingenuity and learning, in which he acknowledges that time, opportunity, and diligence, had given him much advantage. He takes up the work chapter by chapter, and discovers some portion both of learning and acuteness. His arguments are generally the same with those of other Arminians, while he yet seems to differ from them on the subjects of grace and election. Some of his remarks and interpretations of Scripture were not un-

[x] Gangrena, part ii. p. 86. This work, by Moore, is a 4to. volume of 193 pages, published in 1643, and according to his own account 'written through urgent importunity.' 'A refutation' of it was published the same year by 'Thomas Whitefield, Minister of the Gospel at Great Yarmouth;' who takes care to inform us on the title page that 'Thomas Moore was late a weaver in Wills near Wisbitch.' Without approving of the argument of the work, I have no hesitation in saying that it is creditable to the talents of the weaver, and not discreditable to his piety. Owen had more good sense than to endeavour to make his adversary odious because he had been a weaver, or was reckoned a 'Lay preacher.'

[y] Wood's Athen. ii. p. 576. [z] Noncon. Mem. iii. pp. 5—7.

worthy of Owen's attention. He, however, thought differently: for he thus speaks of his opponent. 'For Mr. Horne's book, I suppose you are not acquainted with it; could I have met with any one uninterested person who would have said it deserved a reply, it had not lain so long unanswered.'[a]

Colchester was, about this time, besieged by the Parliamentary army, and Lord Fairfax, the general, having his head-quarters at Coggeshall, became acquainted with Owen, who appears for a time to have acted as chaplain to him.[b] Fairfax was then considered as the head of the Presbyterian party; but it appears from the Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson,[c] that he was an Independent at bottom, though he allowed himself to be overruled by his wife at home, as he was by Cromwell in the council. Of his religious character, Owen appears to have had a high opinion: Milton eulogizes him as one 'who united the utmost fortitude with the utmost courage; and the spotless innocence of whose life seemed to point him out as the peculiar favourite of heaven:'[d] and even Hume says of him;—'He was equally eminent for courage and for humanity; and though strongly infected with prejudices or principles derived from party zeal, he seems never, in the course of his public conduct, to have been diverted by private interest or ambition, from adhering strictly to those principles.'[e]

Owen preached two sermons, one to the army at Colchester on a day of thanksgiving, on account of its surrender; the other at Rumford, to the Parliamentary Committee, which had been imprisoned, occasioned by its deliverance. These he afterward published together, as they were preached from the same passage, Habakkuk i. 1—9. prefixing two dedications, one to Lord Fairfax, and the other to the Committee and some of the officers of Parliament. He designated them, 'A memorial of the deliverance of Essex county and Committee.'[f] In these discourses are some strong statements about the impropriety, and iniquity of human interference with religion. 'Arguments for persecution,' says he, 'have been dyed in the blood of

[a] Epistle prefixed to Vindiciæ Evangelicæ. [b] Dedication to the Two Sermons.
[c] P. 251, 4to. ed. [d] Milton's Prose Works, vol. vi. p. 433.
[e] Hist. of Eng. vii. p. 26. [f] Works, vol. xv. p. 86.

Christians for a long season; ever since the dragon gave his power to the false prophet, they have all died as heretics and schismatics. Suppose you saw, in one view, all the blood of the witnesses which has been let out of their veins on false pretences; that you heard, in one noise, the doleful cry of all pastorless churches, dying martyrs, harbourless children of parents inheriting the promises, wilderness wandering saints, dungeoned believers; perhaps it would make your spirits tender as to this point.'

There are some passages, which seem to encourage more of a warlike spirit than I think quite justifiable on Christian principles. To stir up men to defend or fight for the privileges which Christ has bestowed on his church, is a violation both of the letter and the spirit of his word. To view religious rights as civil privileges, and to maintain the lawfulness of defending them on this ground, is quite a different matter. Christianity justifies no man, as a Christian, in fighting for any thing connected with it; but it is perfectly consistent with its principles to defend what belongs to us as men, or as natives of a country, the constitution of which, secures the enjoyment of Christian or of civil privileges. It bestows no peculiar rights or immunities of a civil nature on its professors; but, on the other hand, it deprives of no rights of which they may be previously possessed.

One of these warlike passages, which has given much offence, and of which a very unfair use has been made, is the following. After noticing that former mercies and deliverances, when thankfully remembered, strengthen faith, and prevent despondency, he exclaims:—'Where is the God of Marstone moor, and the God of Naseby! is an acceptable expostulation in a gloomy day. Oh! what a catalogue of mercies hath this nation to plead in a time of trouble! God came from Naseby, and the Holy One from the west! His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. He went forth in the north, and in the east he did not withhold his hand. The poor town wherein I live, is more enriched with a store of mercies in a few months, than with a full trade of many years,' &c.

This passage is quoted by L'Estrange as a proof that

Owen was one of those fanatics, who believe that success is an evidence of the goodness of a cause.[g] Dr. Grey also, commenting on a passage of Hudibras, affirms on the same ground, that Owen was of this sentiment.[h] But this is a gross perversion of his meaning. It is a mere rhetorical application of the words of Scripture; with the design of impressing the importance of remembering past mercies and deliverances.

As, however, the sentiment that success is an evidence of Divine approbation has been often imputed to Owen, and the party with which he acted, it is important that we can produce his own reply to the charge. 'A cause is good or bad, before it hath success one way or other; and that which hath not its warrant in itself, can never obtain any from its success. The rule of the goodness of any public cause, is the eternal law of reason, with the just legal rights and interests of men. If these make not a cause good, success will never mend it. But when a cause on these grounds is so indeed, or is really judged such by them that are engaged in it, not to take notice of the providence of God in prospering men in the pursuit of it, is to exclude all thoughts of him and his providence from having any concern in the government of the world. And if I, or any other, have, at any time, applied this unto any cause, not warranted by the only rule of its justification, it no way reflects on the truth of the principle which I assert; nor gives countenance to the false one, which he ascribes to me.'[i]

If this quotation does not satisfy the reader that Owen, and I might add most of the men who acted with him, never held the absurd and impious sentiment ascribed to him, he must be unreasonably sceptical. Owen had, no doubt, the same views with Paul, of the characters of those who do evil that good may come;[k] and of whom, even a heathen poet tolerably expresses his dislike:

——— 'Careat successibus opto
Quisquis ab eventu facta notanda putat.'—*Ovid.*

[g] Dissenters' Sayings, part ii. p. 11. [h] Hudibras, part iii. canto ii. l. 1415.
[i] Reflections on a slanderous Libel,—Works, vol. xxi. p. 572. [k] Rom. iii. 8.

CHAP. IV

Owen preaches before Parliament on the day after the execution of Charles I. —The Independents not guilty of putting the King to death—Testimonies on this subject—Remarks on Owen's Sermon—Charges against it—Essay on Toleration annexed to it—Doctrine of Religious Liberty owes its origin to Independents—Writers on this subject—Brownists and Baptists—Jeremy Taylor—Owen—Vane—Milton—Locke—Cook's account of the origin of Toleration among the Independents—A different account of it —Smith and Hume—Neal—Owen preaches again before Parliament—His first acquaintance with Cromwell—Is persuaded to accompany him to Ireland.

On the thirty-first of January, 1649, Owen was called to preach before Parliament, on the most trying occasion on which he ever appeared before that assembly: this was the day after the decapitation of Charles I. A lengthened discussion respecting the causes which produced, and the persons who were engaged in this dismal affair, would be foreign from the design of this work; but as the religious party with which Owen acted, has received a large portion of the blame of this transaction, it cannot be deemed improper to shew, that in this it has been greatly wronged. That any body of religious persons should be guilty of such lawless and unjustifiable procedure, would be sufficient to brand it with deserved and indelible disgrace; but a little acquaintance with the true state of things will evince, that no religious sect can justly be charged with the crime of putting the king to death.

The parties immediately concerned in this tragical event, were the army, the parliament, and the high court of justice. The army was a collection of all the fierce republican spirits, which had been produced by the anarchy, the excitement, and the success of the preceding years. It comprehended a great number of religious persons belonging to various professions, and many of no definite profession whatever; who might pretend to religion, but who, in reality, fought for revolution and plunder. There were in it Presbyterians, and Independents properly so called, and under the latter designation a crowd of anomalous fanatics, who took refuge in the general name and

respectable character of the Congregational body. There were Baptists and Fifth Monarchy men, Seekers and Antinomians, Levellers and Ranters,

'All monstrous, all prodigious things.'

Cromwell and his officers, who ruled the army, and, as it answered their purpose, sometimes wrought on its religious feelings, and at other times on its revolutionary frenzy, can be considered as belonging decidedly to no religious body; though they naturally favoured the Independent rather than any other, as from its principles, they could more easily manage it in political matters.

The parliament, by the numerous changes it had undergone, was reduced to a mere *caput mortuum* by the army. After Colonel Pride's purge, 'none were allowed to enter it,' says Hume, 'but the most furious and determined of the Independents, and these exceeded not the number of fifty or sixty.' Hume never distinguishes between the civil and the religious Independents, nor would it have answered either his political or his religious creed to do so. Some of the persons composing the Rump Parliament were, no doubt, connected with the religious body known by this name; and to such men as Colonel Hutchinson, however much we may think them to have erred, it will not be easy to deny the claim of religious character. But many of them, we know, never considered themselves, or were considered by others, as Independents; nor can it be shewn, that even any considerable number of them were of this profession. ''Tis certain to a demonstration, that there were then left in the house men of all parties, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, and others; so little foundation is there for the conclusion that Independents, and *these only*, put the king to death.'[a]

The same remarks are equally applicable to the high court of justice; which being composed chiefly of officers of the army, and members of the commons, partook of their respective characters. Few of the individuals who composed it, so far as I can discover, ever ranked under the banner of the Congregational body. The testimonies of Whitelocke, Wellwood, Du Moulin, Baxter, Burnet,

[a] Neal's Hist. of the Pur. iii. p. 550.

and of the Convention Parliament itself, which restored Charles II., support the views now given. The substance of these, the reader will find collected in Neal,[b] who justly observes, that the violent writers on the other side 'constantly confound the Independents with the army, which was made up of a number of sectaries, the majority of whom were not of that distinguishing character.'[c] As Neal's testimony, however, may be unjustly suspected of partiality, it is gratifying to be able to adduce the language of a writer, who is far removed from all suspicion of this kind, and whose opinion on this, as on most other subjects of ecclesiastical history, is entitled to the highest respect.

'I am well aware,' says the candid and impartial Mosheim, 'that many of the most eminent and respectable English writers have given the Independents the denomination of Regicides; and if, by the term Independents, they mean those licentious republicans, whose dislike of a monarchical form of government carried them the most pernicious and extravagant lengths, I grant that this denomination is well applied. But if, by the term Independents, we are to understand a *religious* sect, the ancestors of those who still bear the same title in England, it appears very questionable to me, whether the unhappy fate of the worthy prince above-mentioned, ought to be imputed entirely to that set of men. They who affirm that the Independents were the only authors of the death of King Charles, must mean one of these two things; either that the Regicides were animated and set on by the seditious doctrines of that sect, and the violent suggestions of its members; or that all who were concerned in this atrocious deed were themselves Independents, zealously attached to the religious community now under consideration. Now, it may be proved with the clearest evidence that neither of these was the case. There is nothing in the doctrines of this sect, so far as they are known to me, that seems in the least adapted to excite men to such a horrid deed; nor does it appear from the history of these times that the Independents were a whit more exasperated against Charles, than were the *Presbyterians*. And as to the latter supposition, it is far

[b] Neal's Hist. of the Pur. iii. pp. 549—554. [c] Ibid. p. 549.

from being true, that all those who were concerned in bringing this unfortunate prince to the scaffold were Independents; since we learn from the best English writers, and from the public declarations of Charles II., that this violent faction was composed of persons of different sects. That there were Independents among them may be easily conceived.'[d]

The subsequent reasonings of this historian respecting the distinction between the civil and religious Independents, are also highly important, but too long to be quoted here; and though his translator Maclaine, in a note, endeavours to shake the force of his reasonings, the facts of the case are all on the side of Mosheim. Echard, and Bates the physician, both observe that several of the Independents joined with the Presbyterians, in declaring against the design of putting the king to death, in their sermons from the pulpit, in conferences, monitory letters, petitions, protestations, and public remonstrances.[e] None of their ministers expressed their approbation of it, except Hugh Peters, and John Goodwin, neither of whom has strong claims to be considered as belonging to the regular body of Independents; not the former, on account of his fanaticism, nor the latter, on account of his Arminianism. It deserves also to be noticed, that few of the religious Independents suffered after the restoration, on account of their real or supposed connexion with the death of Charles.

In stating these things to vindicate the Independents from the calumnies which have been heaped upon them, I consider myself as doing a service to religion in general, which always suffers when its professors are reproached. The real causes of the king's death are not to be found in the principles or conduct of any religious party; but must be ascribed to the duplicity and fickleness of Charles himself,—to the unconstitutional and despotic principles perpetually instilled into his mind by his immediate attendants and confidential friends; and to the perilous circumstances of the democratic leaders, who had gone too far to recede, and were driven to this desperate stroke for their own salvation.

With some it may be enough to involve Owen in the

[d] Eccles. Hist. cent. xvii. sect. ii. part ii. Note. [e] Neal, iii. p. 538.

guilt of the Regicides, that he was employed by them to preach on such an occasion, as the day after the king's death. The apology made by him in regard to another affair is here, perhaps, the best which can be made. His superiors were persons 'whose commands were not to be gainsayed.' They were aware of the importance of having their conduct sanctioned, even in appearance, by a preacher of Owen's respectability, and on this account, it is probable, he was chosen to discharge a function, which it is impossible to suppose he would have coveted. Perhaps, they expected he would defend or apologize for their measures. If they did, they must have been grievously disappointed, as the discourse maintains a profound and studied silence on the awful transaction of the preceding day. It is founded on Jeremiah xv. 19, 20.; and was published with the title of 'Righteous zeal encouraged by Divine protection;'[f] from which a direct application to the recent events might be expected. Extremely little of this, however, occurs. The text and context were both very suitable to the circumstances of the country, and in a general way, he uses them for this purpose. But he is exceedingly cautious of committing himself by expressing an opinion, either of the court, or the country party; which plainly implies, that while he was not at liberty to condemn, he was unwilling to justify. He tells the parliament very faithfully 'that much of the evil which had come upon the country, had originated within their own walls,' and warns them against 'oppression, self-seeking, and contrivances for persecution.'

Mr. Asty, speaking of this discourse, remarks:—'He appeared before a numerous assembly; it was a critical juncture, and he was not ignorant of the tempers of his principal hearers; he was then a rising man, and to justify the late action was the infallible road to preferment. But his discourse was so modest and inoffensive, that his friends could make no just exception, nor his enemies take an advantage of his words another day.'[g] This last observation is not quite correct: for this discourse occasioned to its author a large portion of abuse and misrepresentation. Dr. Grey, in his examination of Neal's history, en-

[f] Works, vol. xv. p. 157. [g] Memoirs of Owen, p. 8.

deavours to shew from this sermon, that Owen approved of the death of the king. For this purpose two passages are detached from their connexion, and that nothing may be wanting to fix the guilt of the preacher, words are printed in italics, as emphatical, on which he never intended any emphasis should be laid. Grey shall have the full benefit of the alleged evidence without note or comment from me.

'The famed Dr. John Owen, in a sermon preached the day after the king's murder, has the following remarkable passages, which I think plainly discover his approbation of that *execrable parricide*. "As the flaming sword," says he, "turns every way, so God can turn it into every thing. To those that cry, give me a king, God *can give him in his anger*, and from those that cry *take him away*, he can take him *away in his wrath*.—When kings turn seducers, they seldom want good store of followers. Now if the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch. When kings command unrighteous things, and the people suit them with willing compliance, none doubts but the destruction of them both is just and righteous."[h] He must be desperately prejudiced against Owen, indeed, who does not see that this language bears as hard on the people as on the ill-fated king; and had I been disposed to quote passages to shew that Owen disapproved of the death of Charles, I should have selected these as well suited for this purpose.

Grey, in the passage we have now quoted, merely follows the steps of Anthony Wood, who prefers the same charges against Owen's sermon, and on the same grounds. He only goes a little farther, and says that Owen '*applauded* the regicides, and declared the death of that most admirable king to be *just and righteous*.'[i] Wood himself was in this, as in several other instances of his abuse of Owen, the servile copyist of Vernon; whose vile anonymous libel is the storehouse out of which all the future defamers of Owen, supplied themselves with accusations both in matter and form.[k] To sum up the whole, the University of Oxford, on the twenty-first of July, 1683, in the

[h] Grey's Examination, vol. iii. p. 358. [i] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. 738.
[k] Letter to a Friend, &c. pp. 15—18.

fervour of its zeal and loyalty, condemned the positions of this sermon, as pernicious and damnable, and ordered them to be burnt by the Marshal in the school quadrangle, before the members of the University.[l] This act of cowardly revenge on a man whose learning, moderation, and piety had once graced their highest honours, took place within a month of his death; when he must have been insensible alike to their praise or their contumely. It was well their power was then feebler than their inclinations, or they would probably have substituted the author in the place of his writings.[m]

But what renders this discourse chiefly valuable, is the Essay on toleration annexed to it.[n] On this subject, Owen had thought long and deeply, and the fruit of his deliberations he now published; not when he and his party were struggling for existence, but when they had obtained in a great measure the protection and support of the supreme power. As this is a subject of vast importance, and as I consider that the most enlightened views of religious liberty have originated with the Congregationalists, I hope to be excused for entering into some detail upon it.

The right of man to judge for himself on the subject of religion, to act according to his convictions, and to use all proper means for propagating his sentiments, was not understood in any part of the ancient heathen world. Intercommunity of worship was the utmost extent of Pagan liberality; but this is a very different thing from religious liberty. It was properly a permission to unite or agree, rather than a liberty to differ. The foreigner was allowed to practise in private the rites of his own faith; but publicly to profess dissent from the established superstition, and to attempt the introduction of a new faith, or the worship of 'strange gods,' were universally held to be crimes justly

[l] Decree of the Un. of Ox. 1683.

[m] Only two of the twenty-seven propositions of this celebrated Decree are extracted from Owen's writings. The rest are from those of Knox, Buchanan, Calderwood, Goodwin, Baxter, &c. Dr. Jane was the principal promoter of it, and when it was presented to Charles II. in presence of the Duke of York, and the chief persons of the Court, by Dr. Robert Huntington, afterwards Bishop of Raphoe, it was very graciously received.—*Birch's Life of Tillotson*, p. 174. The cause of the injured, however, was in due time avenged in the same style, for on the twenty-third of March, 1710, the House of Lords ordered the Oxford Decree to be burnt by the hands of the hangman.—Sacheverell's Trial, pp. 163, 164. 326, 327.

[n] Works, vol. xv. p. 200.

punishable by the judges. On this account, notwithstanding all the professed indifference of paganism to religious worships and opinions, Christianity experienced the utmost rage and fury of intolerance. Its disciples refused to unite the service of Jesus with that of Mars or Jupiter; and turning from these dumb idols themselves, they sought to turn others also away from them. Hence it was spoken of as 'a new and mischievous superstition;' and its followers were branded as Atheists in respect of the Gods, and as instigated with hatred to men. Their persevering adherence to the cause which they believed to be Divine, was considered merely a sullen obstinacy, deserving only of the severest punishment. The simple declaration in the presence of a judge, that they were Christians, was deemed quite sufficient to justify his immediately sending them to the lions, or the block. But, indeed, while civil liberty was so little understood, as it was in the most celebrated states of the ancient world, it would have been strange had the rights of conscience been respected.

Unhappily, when Christianity acquired the ascendancy, and became blended with secular power, its mistaken or pretended friends adopted the same pernicious principles, and directed their operation either against idolaters, or against the heretical schismatics from their own belief. It is truly deplorable to think of the Christian blood which has been shed by men calling themselves Christians. During the entire reign of Papal darkness and tyranny, intolerance was displayed in awful scenes of devastation and carnage; the blood of saints intoxicated the scarlet-coloured whore, and cried for vengeance against her before the altar of God. The Reformation, which brought relief from many evils, did not altogether remedy this. The Reformers did not understand properly the principles of religious liberty; and inconsistently laid claim to a right for themselves, the exercise of which they denied to others. All the Protestant governments held the lawfulness and necessity of punishing heretics and idolaters; and ranked dissent from the established faith among crimes against the State. Henry VIII. put to death indiscriminately Papists and Protestants, who denied his supremacy; Edward VI. urged on by Cranmer, imbrued his hands in innocent blood on account of reli-

gion; and Elizabeth in numerous instances followed the unhallowed example of her father. At Geneva, sedition and heresy were convertible terms; and those who did not submit to the discipline of the church were subjected to civil excision, and deprived of their rights as citizens.

The great body of the British Puritans, after all they had suffered from it, were far from seeing the evil of persecution. Most of them appear to have believed in the lawfulness of supporting the true religion by coercive and restraining measures. To the Brownists are to be ascribed the first correct views of religious liberty; and from them, and the Baptist and Pœdo-baptist Independents who sprung from them, and who were greatly benefited by their residence in the Low Countries, came every thing which appeared on this topic for many years. In the year 1614, Leonard Busher, one of those people, presented to king James and parliament 'Religion's Peace, or a Plea for Liberty of Conscience.' The leading object of this treatise, is to shew that the true way to make a nation happy is 'to give liberty to all to serve God according as they are persuaded is most agreeable to his word; to speak, write, print peaceably and without molestation in behalf of their several tenets and ways of worship.' This valuable tract contains the most scriptural and enlightened views of religious liberty; exposes, in a series of seventeen arguments, the iniquity and impolicy of persecution; and in the most moving manner invokes the king and parliament to grant the inestimable blessing of toleration. Robinson's 'Justification of separation from the Church of England,' published in 1639, contains some most accurate statements, on the distinct provinces of civil and spiritual authority. The same remark is applicable to an anonymous pamphlet, by some Brownist in 1644, entitled 'Queries of Highest Consideration,' presented to the Dissenting Brethren, and the Westminster Assembly. Burton's 'Vindication of the Churches commonly called Independent,' produced also in 1644, shews 'that the Magistrate must publish evil actions, but hath no power over the conscience of any, to punish a man for that so long as he makes no other breach of God's commandments, or the just laws of the land.' In that same year, Roger Williams, of New England, an In-

dependent Baptist, published his 'Bloody tenet of Persecution for the cause of Conscience;' in which he maintains that 'persons may with less sin be forced to marry whom they cannot love, than to worship where they cannot believe;' and broadly denies that 'Christ had appointed the civil sword as a remedy against false teachers.' This gentleman obtained the first charter for the State of New Providence, of which he was constituted Governor; and to his honour it deserves to be recorded, that he was the first *Governor* who ever pleaded that liberty of conscience was the birth-right of man, and granted it to those who differed from himself, when he had the power of withholding it. The writings of John Goodwin also contributed greatly to diffuse right sentiments on religious liberty.

It would be tiresome to mention all the pamphlets which appeared about this time from the same quarter; for I have not met with any thing written by Episcopalians or Presbyterians down to this period, which contains even an approach to reasonable sentiments on the subject. In the Westminster Assembly, it was debated at great length, and with great keenness. The Presbyterians and Independents ranked on opposite sides in the controversy, and fought, according to Baillie, 'Tanquam pro aris et focis.' Toleration was considered as the grand and fundamental principle of the Independents—the god of their idolatry; and happy had it been for the world had so bloodless a divinity always been the object of worship. This was in the estimation of many at that time, the opprobrium of the party; it will now perhaps be granted as their distinguished honour, that, in the midst of much opposition, they manfully advocated one of the most important rights of men; and, when opportunity offered, 'did to others, as they would that others should do to them.'

In 1647, Jeremy Taylor published his 'Liberty of Prophesying; shewing the unreasonableness of prescribing to other men's faith, and the iniquity of persecuting differing opinions.' This is the first work, produced by a churchman on this subject, which is deserving of notice. It contains, on the whole, rational and scriptural views of the impropriety of exercising authority in religion; but there are some things which detract greatly from its value.

He argues chiefly from the difficulty of expounding the Scriptures, so as to arrive at any certain conclusion on some subjects—from the incompetency of Popes, Councils, or the Church at large, to determine them—from the innocency of error in pious persons—and from the antiquity and plausibility of various sentiments or practices generally held to be erroneous. It is more on such grounds as these, that he rests his defence of toleration, than on the natural rights of men, and the plain language of Scripture. In many parts of the book, it is difficult to determine whether Taylor is arguing from his own personal conviction, or merely as an advocate to serve his cause at the time. Though a churchman, he was a dissenter from the dominant party when the Liberty of Prophesying was written, and was then pleading for toleration to Episcopacy.

We have already noticed the state of Owen's mind respecting liberty of conscience. He had pleaded for it to a certain extent before; others we have seen had published some of the same sentiments; but he has the honour of being the first man in England who advocated, *when his party was uppermost*, the rights of conscience, and who continued to the last to maintain and defend them. In the treatise 'Of Toleration,' annexed to his sermon, he examines the arguments against it brought from Holy Writ, and from other considerations, and finally states his own defence of religious liberty. In the first part, he examines particularly the reasons alleged in the testimony of the Scots General Assembly, and exposes their fallacy. He next considers most of the other arguments, which have been alleged in defence of persecution or coercion, and proceeds to notice the duty of the Magistrate,—to the truth and persons professing it—to those who oppose and revile it—and to such as dissent from it. Without professing to be of the same mind with him in all the particulars of the last topic, we must own, there is so much moderation in his views, and so many exceptions to guard against the abuse of them, that it appears as if he himself felt the difficulties which were involved in his supposing that the civil Magistrate, who had the truth on his side, was bound to provide places of worship and means of support for those who were engaged in promoting it; and to

discourage or remove external inducements to embrace false worship. He seems not to have attended to the difference between what the Magistrate is bound to do *as a Christian*, if he is one, and what he is called to do *as the head* of the *civil community*. Notwithstanding his mistake here, he explicitly and by a variety of arguments, maintains that the Magistrate has no right to meddle with the religion of any person, whose conduct is not injurious to society, and destructive of its peace and order. 'Gospel constitutions in the case of heresy or error seem not to favour any course of violence, I mean, of civil penalties. Foretold it is, that heresies must be, but this is for the manifesting of those that are approved, not the destroying of those that are not. I say destroying, I mean with temporal punishment; for all the arguments produced for the punishment of heretics, holding out capital censures, and these being the tendency of all beginnings in this kind, I mention only the greatest, *including all other arbitrary penalties*, being but steps in walking to the utmost censures. Admonitions and excommunications upon rejection of admonition, are the highest constitutions against such persons: waiting with all patience on them that oppose themselves, if at any time God will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. Imprisoning, banishing, slaying, is scarcely a patient waiting. God doth not so wait on unbelievers. Perhaps those who call for the sword on earth are as unacquainted with their own spirits, as those that called for fire from heaven, Luke xi. And perhaps the parable of the tares gives us a positive rule as to this whole business; for the present I shall not fear to assert that the answers to it, borrowed by our divines from *Bellarmine*, will not endure the trial.'

This passage alone is sufficient to shew the extent and liberality of Owen's opinions; the circumstances in which they were published, and the perseverance with which they were held, are full evidences of the sincerity of their author. While noticing his exertions in this noble cause, I cannot allow myself to pass over some other names which are entitled to a distinguished place in the list of enlightened defenders of religious liberty. The first is the celebrated, defamed, and unfortunate Sir Henry Vane, who,

with all his mysticism, appears to have felt the power and imbibed the spirit of the gospel; and who possessed the most exalted views of Civil and religious freedom. In his 'Retired Man's Meditations,' published in 1655, he accurately defines, in a single sentence, the limits of human authority,—'The province of the Magistrate is this world and man's body; not his conscience, or the concerns of eternity.' Milton, who knew Vane well, in one of his sonnets, expresses the high opinion which he entertained of his religion, and of his nice discernment on the subject of which we are now treating:—

> ——————'To know
> Both spiritual pow'r and civil, what each means,
> What severs each, thou hast learn'd, which few have done:
> The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
> Therefore on thy firm hand religion leans
> In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.'

Milton himself must ever be reckoned one of the ablest advocates of this important doctrine. In his treatise on 'Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes' he maintains 'that it is not lawful for any power on earth to compel in matters of religion,' and that 'two things had ever been found working much mischief to the cause of God; force on the one side restraining, and hire on the other side corrupting the teachers thereof.' In his 'Way to establish a free Commonwealth' he eloquently exclaims, 'Who can be at rest, who can enjoy any thing in this world with contentment, who hath not liberty to serve God and save his own soul according to the best light which God hath planted in him to that purpose, by the reading of his Revealed Will and the guidance of his Holy Spirit.' And in his 'Speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing,' he admirably exposes the absurdity and iniquity of theological as well as political gags and licenses, and pours out a flow of the most beautiful and impassioned eloquence on this most interesting subject.[o]

Both Vane and Milton were Independents on the subject of Church Government; and though Locke, whose immortal treatise on toleration, in accuracy of statement and cogency of reasoning, placed all its predecessors far

[o] Milton's Prose Works.

behind, and has left nothing almost to be done by succeeding writers—though Locke, I say, was a Churchman, the main argument of his treatise is the grand principle of Dissent; and many who extol the Philosopher, forget that he plowed with the heifer of an Independent. Locke was a student of Christ Church while Owen was Dean; and to the Head of the College, it can scarcely be doubted, he was indebted for the germ of his future work.

The preceding statements will perhaps enable the reader to understand the truth of Hume's Observation: 'Of all Christian sects, this (of the Independents) was the first, which during its prosperity as well as adversity, always adopted the principle of toleration; and it is remarkable that so reasonable a doctrine owed its origin not to reasoning, but to the height of extravagance and fanaticism.' It would, indeed, be very remarkable were it true. But with Hume, extravagance and fanaticism are only terms of reproach for scriptural sentiments and religious zeal. Had Hume been better acquainted with some of the Independents, he would have found them not so incapable of reasoning as he alleges; and might have discovered that their tolerating principles were the result not of accident or caprice, but of the ideas which they entertained on other parts of Christianity.

I am aware that their sentiments on the subject of religious liberty are attempted to be accounted for from the operation of accidental circumstances. 'The Independents,' it has been said, 'were originally few in number; and thus subjected to the contempt and severity of persecution, they expatiated upon the importance and the blessedness of religious freedom. Innumerable sects, many of them professing the wildest tenets, and actuated by the most gloomy and savage enthusiasm, arose in England during the struggles between the King and the Parliament; and these sects naturally supported the Independents, and thus the ardour for toleration, which had originally been excited in them, as it had been in other denominations by eagerness to escape from suffering, became from policy and from anxiety to check or subdue the Presbyterians, the spirit of their system; and it continued to be so after they had acquired power, because they were aware that the slightest

departure from it would have separated from them the different sects, and thus restored preponderance to the enemies whom they had so much cause to dread.'[p]

All this may seem very plausible to a person superficially acquainted with the period. But it is natural to ask why persecution did not drive others, the Presbyterians for instance, to advocate toleration? Why did not political motives induce them to make friends by the same means? Were the Independents the only politicians during that period of anarchy? Would not others have been likely to see through the veil of hypocrisy now woven for the Independents by Dr. Cook, and not have left to him the honour of the discovery? It is evident he has not attended to those parts of the system of Independency, which, necessarily and independently of all external circumstances, produce the love and the defence of religious liberty.

Till the Professors of Christianity obtained possession of secular power, or became the objects of its patronage, they never thought of compulsory measures for promoting the faith, or restraining the religion of others. The renunciation of all dependance on civil authority in matters of religion, and of all connexion with temporal governments, forms an essential part of consistent independency: the abandonment of every thing like force for promoting or preserving the interests of the Gospel follows as matter of course. Another principle of Independency is the necessity of genuine conversion, to qualify and entitle men to enjoy the privileges of the kingdom of Christ. The absurdity as well as unlawfulness of using any but spiritual means to produce this change, and to bring men into the church, must be very obvious. So fully were the sentiments of the Independents on this point understood, during the period of which we are speaking, that Baillie represents them as their capital opinion, and the chief cause of their separation from others;[q] and declares that if they were acted on, forty for one would be excluded from the best reformed churches.[r] In connexion with these leading principles of the system, there is a third, which contributes to the same result. Every member of an Independent

[p] Cook's History of the Church of Scotland, vol. iii. pp. 94, 95.
[q] Dissuasive, p. 155. [r] Letters and Journals, vol. ii. p. 85.

Church is understood to take part in the discipline of it. He is never required to act but according to his own convictions, and can no longer be retained in it, than he is satisfied its procedure is according to the word of God. If Independents judge it to be unlawful to compel one another to act contrary to their convictions, they must hold the unlawfulness of interfering by force to compel or restrain others.

These are the principles out of which the tolerating conduct of Independents arises. Their fundamental doctrines are favourable to all that is valuable in the civil and religious privileges of men. That members of that community have not always understood, or acted upon their own principles, is admitted. But a persecuting Independent is a monster; because he is acting in opposition to the life and glory of his own system. Others may persecute consistently with their principles, but he can only do it in the face of his. To withdraw from national churches, protest against authoritative synods, and refuse subscription to human creeds; and yet to employ the arm of power to propagate their own sentiments, or to defend the use of it by others, would be an exhibition of the grossest folly, or the practice of the greatest knavery, ever known in the world. To maintain the necessity of conversion in order to the enjoyment of the kingdom of God, and to promote conversion at the point of the sword, would be the incongruities of madmen, and not the actions of rational beings.

As I have quoted the opinion of one northern philosopher on Independency, I shall be excused for quoting another. Dr. Adam Smith, after noticing what would be the effect of withdrawing political influence and positive law entirely from religion, and leaving the various sects to the natural progress of truth or error, observes, 'This plan of ecclesiastical government, or more properly of no ecclesiastical government, was what the sect called Independents, a sect no doubt of very wild enthusiasts, proposed to establish in England toward the end of the civil war. If it had been established, though of a very unphilosophical origin, it would probably by this time have been productive of the most philosophical good temper and moderation with

regard to every sort of religious principle.'[3] This passage discovers the same philosophical contempt of religious persons, and the same unphilosophical mode of accounting for facts and opinions which were beyond the sphere of his own understanding, which are marked in the language of his friend and countryman Hume. It shews clearly, however, that Smith's opinion of the tolerating principles of the Independents was the same with that of the historian of England. It discovers the strong conviction which the philosopher had of the salutary influence of these sentiments. Had Hume and Smith been capable of entering into the views we have just been stating, they would probably have given the Independents credit for knowing something of the philosophy of Christianity, and of man too—and might have been led to see that these principles are conducive not only to 'philosophical good temper,'—but to something of higher and more durable importance.

I can scarcely allow myself to apologize for this long, apparent digression. The subject is one of so much importance, and the part which Owen took in discussing it, was so honourable to his character and talents, that I felt it impossible to pass over it slightly. If to the Puritans, Britain is indebted in a great measure for her CIVIL LIBERTY, to the INDEPENDENTS she has been indebted for all that is rational and important in her views of RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. I know it is said, though they possessed better theoretical sentiments on the subject of toleration than others, when they have possessed power they have acted in the same manner as other parties have done. Even Neal exclaims, 'How defective was their instrument of Government under Cromwell! How arbitrary the proceedings of their tryers! How narrow their list of fundamentals! And how severe their restraints of the press!'[4] The conduct of the New England Congregationalists, to Baptists and Quakers, has also been referred to as evidence of the persecuting disposition of Independents when possessed of power. As all these subjects will be noticed in subsequent parts of this work, I must waive any consi-

[3] Wealth of Nations, vol. iii. p. 154,—5th Ed. 1776.
[4] Preface to vol. iv. of History of the Puritans.

deration of them now. I am far from thinking that every Independent fully understood and exemplified all his own principles; but the more the subject is investigated, the more will the preceding statements be found to be correct.

It does not appear that Owen's silence on the subject of the king's death lost him the favour of Parliament; for on the nineteenth of April following, we find him again preaching before it and the chief officers of the army, when he delivered his celebrated Sermon on the 'Shaking and translating of heaven and earth;' for which he next day received the thanks of the house, and an order to print it.[u] In his dedication to the Commons he apologizes for his inability to do justice to the subject, from the little time he had to prepare it, and 'the daily troubles, pressures, and temptations he had to encounter in the midst of a poor and numerous people.' It is a long and important discourse, containing many free sentiments expressed with great vigour and plainness. 'The time shall come,' he exclaims, as if inspired by the spirit of prophecy, 'when the earth shall disclose her slain, and not the simplest heretic shall have his blood unrevenged; neither shall any atonement or expiation be allowed for this blood, while a toe of the image or a bone of the beast is left unbroken.' Nor does he leave us at any loss to ascertain who are the antichristian powers to which he refers. 'Is it not evident,' he asks, 'that the whole present constitution of the government of the nations is so cemented with antichristian mortar, from the very top to the bottom, that without a thorough shaking they cannot be cleansed? This plainly discovers that the work which the Lord is doing relates to the untwining of this close combination against himself and the kingdom of his dear Son; and he will not leave it till he hath done it. To what degree in the several nations this shaking shall proceed I have nothing to determine in particular, the Scripture not having expressed it. This only is certain, it shall not stop nor receive its period, befor the interest of Antichristianity be wholly separated from the power of these nations.'

It was this sermon, I apprehend, that introduced Owen

[u] Works, vol. xv. p. 338.

to the acquaintance of Cromwell,[x] who then heard him for the first time, and was much pleased with the discourse. Owen intended to return home within two days after preaching, but calling before he left town to pay his respects to General Fairfax, with whom he had become acquainted at the siege of Colchester, he there accidentally met with Cromwell. When Owen waited on his excellency, the servants told him, he was so much indisposed that several persons of quality had been refused admittance. He however sent in his name, requesting it to be mentioned to the General, and that he only came to express his obligations for the many favours received from him. In the mean time Cromwell came in with a number of the officers, who seeing Owen, immediately walked up to him, and laying his hand upon his shoulder in the familiar manner which he was accustomed to use to his friends, said, 'Sir, you are the person I must be acquainted with.' Owen modestly replied, 'That will be much more to my advantage than yours.' 'We shall soon see that,' said Cromwell; and taking him by the hand immediately led him into Fairfax's garden; where he told him of his intended expedition to Ireland, and requested that he would accompany him for the purpose of regulating the affairs of Trinity college. Owen objected, on account of his charge of the church at Coggeshall; but Cromwell would take no denial, and from entreaties proceeded to commands. He told him his youngest brother was going as standard-bearer in the army, and he employed him to use his influence to induce compliance. He also wrote to the church at Coggeshall on the subject, which was exceedingly averse to part with its beloved pastor; till at length Cromwell told them he must, and should go. Owen finding how things stood at last, consulted some of his brethren in the ministry, who advising him to comply, he finally began to make some preparation for the journey.[y]

[x] Mr. Asty's Memoirs of Owen connects his acquaintance with Cromwell with his Sermon from Rom. iv. 20. preached Feb. 28, 1649. But this must be a mistake, arising from the confusion sometimes occasioned by the old and new mode of beginning the year. That Sermon was preached in 1650 according to our reckoning. On the same day 1649, he dates his address to the house prefixed to his discourse after the King's death, from Coggeshall. And the Sermon on Rom. iv. itself, shews that he had been in Ireland, consequently must have been preached subsequently to his acquaintance with Cromwell.

[y] Memoirs of Owen, pp. 9, 10.

Such was the commencement of Owen's intimacy, and connexion with Oliver Cromwell. The friendship now begun, lasted during the greater part of Cromwell's life, and was productive of very important consequences to Owen. That Cromwell had a high regard for Owen, is evident from the attentions he paid him, and the honours which he conferred on him. That Owen had a reciprocal respect for Cromwell, is no less certain,—a respect which was founded on his belief in the private worth, the personal talents, and the public virtues of that extraordinary man. On few subjects is it so difficult to speak with candour and justice, as on the character of Cromwell. By his friends, or his enemies, he has been represented as a saint, or a demon; adorned with every virtue, or degraded with every vice, of human nature. His character was certainly made up of inconsistencies; and his history is full of paradoxes. Whether the good or the evil most preponderated in his conduct, will, perhaps, be estimated, as men are friends or enemies of his political measures. To unmingled praise, he is by no means entitled; and unqualified censure is equally undeserved. He did much to promote the glory of his country; if not a religious man himself (which I am not prepared to admit), he certainly promoted religion in others, and was eminently the friend of religious liberty at home and abroad. If he did not always act as he ought, it can scarcely be denied, that few who have grasped the rod of power, have used it with so much moderation, and so generally for the public good, as Oliver Cromwell.

CHAP. V.

Owen preaches before Parliament—Joins the army—Character of the army—Arrives in Ireland—Labours in Dublin—First controversy with Baxter—Character of Baxter—Preaches before Parliament on his return from Ireland—Measures of the Commonwealth to promote religion in that country—Owen appointed to accompany Cromwell into Scotland—Preaches in Berwick and Edinburgh—State of religion in Scotland—Testimony of the English ministers—Of Binning—Rutherford—Burnet—Neal—Kirkton—Owen's return to Coggeshall—Appointed to the Deanery of Christ Church—Account of this office—Remarks on his acceptance of it—Strictures of Milton—Owen preaches before Parliament—Death of Ireton—Owen preaches his Funeral Sermon—Character of Ireton—Preaches again before Parliament.

SEVERAL months elapsed between the first interview of Owen with Cromwell, and his being under the necessity of accompanying him to Ireland. On the 7th of June, 1649, the city of London gave a grand entertainment in Grocer's hall, to the general, the officers of state, and the house of commons, to which they repaired in great pomp, after hearing two sermons from Owen and Goodwin. On the following day, the house referred it to the Oxford committee to prefer the preachers to be heads of colleges in that university, and returned thanks for their sermons.[a] The discourse which Owen preached on this occasion, is entitled, 'Human power defeated.'[b] In a note at the foot of the first page, it is said to have been occasioned by the defeat of the Levellers, at Burford, on the 18th of May preceding. To the designs and ruin of that party, there are repeated allusions in the discourse. They were a body of fanatical desperadoes, who were enemies to civil magistracy, to the regular ministry of the gospel, and to all stated ordinances. About four thousand of them assembled at Burford, under the command of a person of the name of Thomson, formerly condemned for sedition, but pardoned by the general. Colonel Reynolds, and afterwards Fairfax, and Cromwell fell upon them, while unprepared for defence, took four hundred of them prisoners, and reduced the rest.[c]

On the 2d of July Owen received his commission from

[a] Whitelocke's Mem. p. 371. [b] Works, vol. xvi. p. 281. [c] Hume, vi. p. 125.

parliament, to go to Ireland as chaplain to Lieutenant General Cromwell; and £100 per annum was ordered to be paid to his wife and children in his absence.[d] This was no great reward for leaving his family, and an affectionate congregation. He sailed with the army, which consisted of fourteen thousand men, from Milford Haven, about the middle of August. Previously to its embarkation, a day of fasting and prayer was observed; in which, after three ministers had prayed, of whom Owen, probably, was one, 'Cromwell himself, and Colonels Gough and Harrison, expounded some parts of Scripture very suitably to the occasion.' The influence of these exercises, and such conduct on the part of its commanders, must have produced a very powerful effect on a body so constituted as was the army of the Commonwealth. It was under a severe discipline, not an oath was to be heard throughout the whole camp; but the soldiers spent their leisure hours in reading their bibles, in singing psalms, and religious conferences.[e] It was formidable to the enemy in the field, but never cruel to those who laid down their arms; it committed no lawless ravages on the persons or the property of the inhabitants; who, when they compared their conduct with the turbulence, the intemperance, the impiety, and the debauchery of the Royalists, were wont to salute them as friends, and consider them as guests. They were a stay to the good, a terror to the evil, and the warmest advocates for every exertion of piety and virtue.[f] Nor are we dependent entirely on the testimony of friends for this view of the parliamentary troops. 'I observed,' says Chillingworth, 'a great deal of piety in the commanders and soldiers of the parliament's army; I confess their discourse and behaviour do speak them Christians; but I can find little of God or godliness in our men. They will not seek God while they are in their bravery, nor trust him when they are in distress. I have much ado to bring them on their knees, to call upon God, or to resign themselves up to him when they go upon any desperate service, or are cast into any perplexed condition.'[g] The testimony of Lord Clarendon, in which the two armies are compared, is much to the same purport. 'The

[d] Whitelocke, p. 398. [e] Neal, iv. p. 4.
[f] Milton's Prose Works, vol. vi. p. 433. [g] Maizeaux's Life of Chillingworth, p. 331.

royal army,' he says, 'was a dissolute, undisciplined, wicked, beaten army;—whose horse their friends feared, and their enemies laughed at; being terrible only in plunder, and resolute in running away.'[h] The other forces he elsewhere describes, as 'an army to which victory is entailed, and which, humanly speaking, could hardly fail of conquest whithersoever it should be led—an army whose sobriety and manners, whose courage and success, made it famous and terrible over the world; which lived like good husbandmen in the country, and good citizens in the city.'[i] Such was the army commanded by Cromwell, which gained all his battles, and to which, for a time, Owen was attached as one of the chaplains. It consisted of a body of warriors, which was animated not merely by the *amor patriae,* but by the *amor Dei et gloriae eternae,* and fought with more than mortal courage.

In the course of the same month in which it embarked, it arrived safely in Dublin, where Owen took up his lodgings in Trinity college. It is no part of my business to follow the progress of the army, or to describe its victories. Owen remained in Dublin during the greater part of the period he spent in Ireland. His health was somewhat affected, and 'he was burdened with manifold employments, and with constant preaching to a numerous multitude of as thirsting people after the gospel, as ever he conversed with.'[k] Nor were his labours without fruit. I have accidentally discovered two individuals, Dorothy Emett, and Major Manwaring, who ascribe their first convictions to his preaching in Dublin. Many more, we may hope, will appear at another day. 'Mr. Owen,' says Dorothy Emett, 'was the first man by whose means and ministry, I became sensible of my condition. I was much cast down, and could have no rest within me; and so I continued till his going away from us, and at his going he bid me believe in Christ, and be fervent in prayer.' She afterwards obtained comfort. '1 heard Mr. Owen in Dublin,' said Major Manwaring, 'who did me much good, and made me to see my misery in the want of Christ.' I extract these testimonies from a curious and scarce book, by John Rogers,—

[h] Clarend. Rebel. iv. p. 729. [i] Clarend. Lives of Lord Chancellors, ii. p. 126.
[k] Owen's Death of Christ, pref.

'The tabernacle for the Sun;' in which the experience of a number of members of an Independent church in Dublin is recorded.[l] I feel the more pleasure in quoting them, as they sufficiently confute an unfounded saying ascribed to Dr. Owen—that he never knew that he had been useful in converting one sinner. Owen, I am very sure, had no reason for such a discouraging view of his labours. What he did in arranging the affairs of Trinity college cannot be ascertained, as the registers of the university prior to the Restoration no longer exist. Whatever he was entrusted with, we are sure he would endeavour conscientiously to discharge; though it must have been extremely difficult in the circumstances in which Ireland then was, and during a residence of only a few months, to effect any thing of great importance.

While in Dublin, however, amidst all his labours, he found time to prepare a reply to some remarks of Baxter, on his work on Redemption. This he published in London, about May next year. 'Of the death of Christ, the price he paid, and the purchase he made—and the doctrine concerning these things, formerly delivered in a treatise against universal redemption, vindicated from the exceptions and objections of Mr. R. B.' 4to.[m] This was the commencement of a series of discussions and collisions between Baxter and Owen, which continued on one subject or another till the death of both these eminent men. Justice obliges me to state, that Baxter was invariably the aggressor; as Owen seems never to have meddled with him but in the way of self-defence. Whatever were his reasons, Baxter seldom omitted an opportunity of hitting a blot in Owen's conduct or writings; and not content with wrangling during his life, he left a legacy of reproach on the memory of his brother, which continued to operate long after his death.[n]

The work of Baxter, to which this is a reply, is his 'Aphorisms of Justification,' in an Appendix to which, he had made some animadversions on Owen's views of redemption. Baxter was a man of eminent piety and indefatigable zeal; who laboured hard to make that which was crooked straight, and to number that which was wanting;

[l] Book ii. chap. 6. [m] Works, vol. v. p. 565. [n] Baxter's own Life, passim.

—to reconcile conflicting opinions, and to harmonize contending spirits. Pure in his intentions, but often injudicious in his measures, his labours frequently produced only disappointment and trouble. He was the most metaphysical man of his age, constantly employing himself in making distinctions where there was no difference, or in attempting to shew, that the most opposite sentiments admitted of the same explanation. A professed enemy to controversy, yet perpetually engaged in it; he multiplied disputes by endeavouring to destroy them. He was neither a Calvinist, nor an Arminian; and yet at times he was claimed by both. He was neither a churchman, nor a dissenter; but sometimes wrote against the one, and sometimes against the other, till all parties might quote him as an advocate, and meet him as an enemy. To no man, perhaps, were the words of the heathen satirist ever more applicable:—

Tenet insanabile vulnus
Scribendi cacoethes.

Of this he seems to have been at times sensible, as he frankly acknowledges, that he had written '*multitudo librorum,*' which contained '*multa vana et inutilia.*' He was nearly of the same standing with Owen, and inferior to him in learning; but his equal in acuteness, in patience of research, and in the abundance of his labours. The differences between them on various subjects, lay more, perhaps, in words than in things; and it must be regretted, that a degree of keenness marked the conduct of their discussions, which the importance of the points at issue, and the meekness of wisdom, will by no means justify.

A particular account of Owen's reply to Baxter would now be very uninteresting, as he admits himself, that the contention lay more about 'expressions than opinions.' It is, in fact, a piece of dry scholastic discussion, partaking more of the character of theological logomachy, than almost any other performance of our author. To this he was doubtless led by the subtilty of his opponent, who employed all his acuteness to detect error in his views of the death of Christ, and the particularity of its design. Owen, however, stoutly defends his original statements, and successfully unravels the web in which his ingenious adversary

endeavoured to entangle him. More simple reference to the plain language of Scripture, and less attachment to merely human forms of expression, would certainly have been advantageous to both. A prolix contention whether the death of Christ was *solutio ejusdem*, or only *tantundem;* that is, whether it was a payment of the very thing which, by law, we ought to have paid, or of something held by God to be equivalent, does not promise much profit or gratification to the mind; especially as our views of the atonement being the alone ground of acceptance, are not likely to be much affected whichever of the sides we embrace. Yet this seems to be the turning point of the present debate between Owen and Baxter.

Trifling, however, as the difference may appear, to Owen's Vindication, Baxter published an answer in the 'Confession of his Faith,' 4to. 1655; the object of which, is to explain himself more fully on the subjects of repentance, justification, sincere obedience, &c. In the course of this volume he introduces Owen, and tries to fasten on him the charge of Antinomianism. To this, Owen replied at the end of his VINDICIAE EVANGELICAE, vindicating his former sentiments, and complaining of injustice on the part of Baxter; who, determined to have the last word, though it should only be in the way of assigning reasons for not writing, rejoined and recriminated, in an Appendix to his 'Five Disputations of right to the Sacraments,' 4to. 1656. So interminable at times are the debates of systematic theologians. Baxter, however, afterwards acknowledged that he had meddled too rashly with Owen, and that he was then too raw to be a writer.[o]

Immediately after his return from Ireland, he was called to preach before parliament on a day of solemn humiliation throughout the kingdom, February 28th, 1650. This discourse, entitled, 'The Steadfastness of Promises, and the Sinfulness of Staggering,'[p] discovers the deep interest he took in the welfare of Ireland. 'I would,' says he, 'there were, for the present, one gospel preacher for every walled town in the English possession in Ireland. The land mourneth, and the people perish for want of knowledge: many run to and fro, but it is upon other designs—knowledge is

[o] Life, part i. p. 107. [p] Works, vol. xv. p. 254.

not increased. They are sensible of their wants, and cry out for supply. The tears and cries of the inhabitants of Dublin after the manifestation of Christ, are ever in my view. If they were in the dark, and loved to have it so, it might, in some respects, close the door upon the bowels of our compassion; but they cry out of their darkness, and are ready to follow any one whatever who has a candle. If their being without the gospel move not our hearts, it is hoped, their importunate cries will disquiet our rest, and extort help as a beggar doth alms.'

He calls upon parliament not to consider the subjugation of Ireland the only object deserving of their attention; but to appoint a committee for the consideration of its religious state, and to take other steps for supplying the wants, and redressing the grievances, of that ill-fated country. In consequence of these representations, seconded by those of Cromwell, parliament passed an ordinance on the 8th of March, for the encouragement of religion and learning in Ireland. By this act, certain lands were devoted to the support of Trinity college, and the endowment of its professors; for erecting another college in Dublin, and maintaining its teachers; and for the erection of a free school, and the support of the master and scholars.[q] The university of Dublin being thus revived, and put on a new footing, the parliament sent over six of their most acceptable preachers, to give it reputation; appointing them two hundred pounds per annum out of the bishop's lands; and till that could be duly raised, to be paid out of the public revenue. By these methods learning began to revive, and in a few years, religion appeared with a better face than it had ever done in that kingdom before.[r] Nothing is more honourable to the Commonwealth government, than the attention it invariably paid to representations respecting the state of religion in all parts of the country, and the measures it employed to advance the interests of the gospel. It was, in fact, a college *de propaganda fide* as much as a civil institute; which provided for the spiritual, as well as the temporal welfare of its subjects. It did this too without making a particular religious profession the test of civil privileges; and never forced the peculiar

[q] Neal, iv. p. 76. [r] Ibid.

sentiments of the governors upon the consciences of the governed. Policy, perhaps, dictated some of its religious measures; but never, on the whole, was religion so little abused by state enactments, or made so little subservient to worldly purposes. I can account for this, only by admitting the decidedly Christian character of the body of the men then in power. Persons of another description would either have pursued different measures, or have given to religious objects more of a secular aspect and tendency.

Cromwell returned to London the end of May, 1650, and left it for Scotland the following month. An order, some time after, passed the house of commons for Mr. Joseph Caryl, and Mr. Owen, to proceed to the army in Scotland, agreeably to the desire of the general.[s] According to the declaration of the parliament, the invasion of Scotland was occasioned by the Scots declaring themselves enemies to the Commonwealth government, and to all who adhered to it; by their folly in proclaiming, in Scotland, Charles Stuart, king of England and Ireland, and promising him assistance to invade England; and by other things which led the parliament to believe that they would march nto England the first opportunity, to avenge the quarrel of the covenant, the death of the king, and the loss of their influence. This declaration was published by the parliament; and another by Cromwell in name of the army, was addressed, in the style of the times, 'To all that are saints, and partakers of the faith of God's elect in Scotland.' The latter contains reasons for putting the king to death, and excluding his family from the throne; for erecting a commonwealth, and rejecting Presbyterian church government, with a refutation of the charges of heresy and blasphemy charged on the army. Cromwell, however, did not spend time in paper manifestoes. The progress of his arms gave an energy to his declarations; and the battle of Dunbar decided the fate of Scotland, and opened the gates of its metropolis. Owen joined him at Berwick, in obedience to the orders of parliament. We have no reason to think that he was desirous of the kind of employment thus forced upon him. United to an affectionate church, fond

[s] Whitelocke, p. 456.

of rural retirement, and the head of a growing family; the noise of a camp, and the din of arms, must have been revolting to his feelings, and destructive of his studious habits. In Ireland, he had remained as short time as possible, and his residence in Scotland could not be more congenial to his wishes. The Scots were generally opposed to the parliamentary proceedings, and their ministers were among the most determined enemies of that form of church polity to which Owen was attached. In such circumstances, the preaching of an apostle would have been listened to with distrust and suspicion; and conduct however harmless, would scarcely pass without reprehension.

We have two Sermons preached by Owen during his journey to Scotland, and his residence in it. They are both from the same text, Isaiah lvi. 7. 'For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.'[t] The first was preached at Berwick, on the 21st of July,[u] on the advance of the army, and the other in Edinburgh. In a dedication prefixed to them, addressed 'to the Lord General Cromwell,' and dated Edinburgh, November 26th, 1650, he tells him, that 'It was with thoughts of peace he embraced his call to this place in time of war,'—that his chief design in complying with it, 'was to pour out a savour of the gospel on the sons of peace in Scotland; that he hoped this had been manifested in the consciences of all with whom he had to do in the work of the ministry; and that though some were so seasoned with the leaven of contention about carnal things, as to disrelish the weightier things of the gospel, yet the great owner of the vineyard had not left him without a comfortable assurance, that his labour in the Lord had not been in vain.' The discourses are entitled, 'The Branch of the Lord, the Beauty of Zion,' and contain scarcely an allusion to the peculiar circumstances of Scotland.

In a letter written during this visit from Musselburgh, in the beginning of August, and addressed to Commissioner Lisle, he says:—'I dare not write the particulars of the fight, being assured that you have it from better hands: the

[t] Works, vol. xv. p. 380.

[u] Letter from Cromwell to the Council of State, printed in Original Memoirs, written during the civil war. Edin. 1806. p. 225.

issue was, that they were repulsed by an handful, and an hundred and eighty taken prisoners; amongst whom Major Strachan himself is reported to be slain; the whole party pursued to their works. Four ministers came out with them, but being not known, received the lot of war, three of them killed, and one taken. This was the party they most relied upon, as being especially consecrated by the Kirk to this service. Their ministers told the people before our army came, that they should not need to strike one stroke, but stand still, and they should see the sectaries destroyed.'[x]

This letter was read in the House of Commons, and printed along with others by its command. Lisle, to whom it was addressed, was then one of the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal. He was the son of Sir W. Lisle, of the Isle of Wight; he was bred to the law, and was chosen a member of the Long Parliament. He became one of the leading republicans, and assisted Bradshaw as President of the High Court of Justice on the trial of the King. He held many public places under Cromwell, and seems always to have been sufficiently attentive to his worldly interests. Foreseeing the restoration of Charles, he prudently retired to the continent, and took up his residence at Lausanne; where he was barbarously assassinated, at the instigation of the royal party, as he was going to church, on the 11th of August, 1664.[y]

The fight referred to in the letter was one of the skirmishes, which took place between Leith and Edinburgh, previously to the taking of the latter place by Cromwell. Colonel Strachan was not killed, as Owen supposed. He had formerly been a friend to the Commonwealth, and afterwards heartily espoused its cause, as well as the religious principles of its leaders. Who the Ministers were, who were slain and taken, I know not; but they had certainly nothing to do in disguise in such an affair. The lan-

[x] Original Memoirs, p. 244.

[y] Noble's Memoirs, vol. ii. 567. Ludlow, vol. iii. 127. His widow, Lady Alicia Lisle, met with treatment even more barbarous than her husband. For the unpardonable crime of harbouring a Nonconformist minister, she was sentenced to be hanged by the infamous Jefferies, after the jury had thrice brought her in, not guilty. The sentence was changed; but she was actually beheaded for this offence at Winchester! She died with a heroism worthy of a Christian, expressing her entire and unshaken confidence in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God.

guage which the Scots clergy are said to have used about the destruction of the English army, was too common with all parties at the time. When ministers forget the nature of their office, and begin to act as prophets and leaders of armies, it is a righteous thing in God to leave them to disgrace.

When the English army took possession of Edinburgh, the ministers of the city retired for protection to the castle. In consequence of this, a very curious correspondence took place between Cromwell and them. The General sent notice to the Governor of the castle, that the ministers might return to the discharge of their duties, that they should have full liberty to preach, and that none in the army should molest them. They replied, that no security being offered for their persons; they, therefore, resolved to reserve themselves for better times, and to wait upon him who had hid his face, for a while, from the sons of Jacob. To this Cromwell replied, in a letter to the Governor, which produced an answer from the ministers, and a rejoinder from the General.[z] The correspondence affords a curious illustration of the sentiments of both parties; but as it is printed not only in Thurloe's State Papers, and Whitelocke's Memorials, but also in Neal, it is unnecessary here to insert it.[a]

As the Presbyterian ministers remained in the castle, the ministers of the army took possession of the pulpits, where the people heard them with suspicion and wonder.[b] How long Owen remained in Edinburgh is uncertain, he most probably accompanied the army to the west, and preached in Linlithgow, Stirling, and other places. In Glasgow a curious discussion is said to have taken place between some of the Scots ministers and him, in the presence of Cromwell. At this meeting, it is said that Mr. Hugh Binning so managed the dispute, that he nonplused Cromwell's ministers; which led Oliver to ask, after the meeting was over, who that learned and bold young man was; and on being told his name was *Binning*, 'He hath

[z] Neal, iv. pp. 24—26.

[a] 'These letters,' Hume says, 'are the best of Cromwell's wretched compositions that remain, and maintain the chief points of the Independent theology.' From their phraseology, I strongly suspect them to have been the production of Owen's pen.

[b] Kirkton.

bound well indeed,' said he, but laying his hand on his sword, 'this will loose all again.'[c] There is nothing improbable in the meeting, and Cromwell's pun quite accords with other anecdotes of his conversation.

The state of religion in Scotland, during the ten years which preceded the English invasion, and during the rule of the commonwealth afterwards, has been much misunderstood. The zealous friends of Presbyterian discipline, have represented the period from 1638 to 1649, as the golden age of religion in Scotland, and the following years as exhibiting a lamentable falling off. And, indeed, if true religion consists in the regular meeting of church courts, and the overwhelming power of ecclesiastical rulers, the former period would be very distinguished. But if much of the form may exist without the power of religion, we shall be cautious how we judge of the state of religion from the proceedings of Assemblies. That there were then many excellent men in the Presbyterian church is beyond dispute; but that not a few of the clergy were destitute of genuine piety, and that a vast majority of the people were in no better state, are equally unquestionable. The Assemblies were exceedingly zealous in putting down Episcopacy, in establishing uniformity, and in passing persecuting laws;[d] but had much less of the spirit of Christ than their office required. The English ministers had but a low opinion of the state of religion on their coming into Scotland. According to a testimony from the Army, quoted by Whitelocke, the Church of Scotland was 'A Kirk whose religion is formality, and whose government is tyranny, a generation of very hypocrites and vipers.'[e] Joseph Caryl, John Oxenbridge, and Cuthbert Sydenham, ministers who attended the army, assert that 'The experience of the true and deserving shepherds here (the ministers of the church), who are as *dear to their other brethren as sheep to the wolves*, doth tell them that almost nine parts of ten in their flock are not sheep; not fit, say they, for civil; much less, say we, for spiritual privileges.'[f] This language shews what

[c] Biographia Scoticana, p. 167.—Binning was a man of piety, talents, and learning; as his posthumous works evince. His sermons, considering the time at which he lived, and that he died in his twenty-sixth year, do him very great honour.

[d] Acts of Assembly from 1638 to 1649, printed Edin. 1682, pp. 192. 355, et passim.

[e] Mem. p. 456.

[f] Preface to 'A Little Stone out of the Mountain,' by Lockyer, 1652.

was the state of parties in the church then; the resolutionists and the remonstrants being something like the moderate and the orthodox among the clergy now. Should it be thought these are the prejudiced statements of enemies and strangers, an extract or two from the warmest and most upright friends of the church will shew that they are far from being too strong. 'The scantiness of gracious men,' says Hugh Binning, in a discourse preached in 1650, 'is the spot of judicatories; that there are many children of the world, *but few children of light in them.* This is the spot of Assemblies, Synods, Presbyteries, that there are *few godly ministers.* Alas! that this complaint should be, even among those whose office it is to beget many children to God; how few of them are begotten, or hath the image of their Father.'[g] The testimony of Samuel Rutherford, whose piety and attachment to the church will not be questioned, is equally strong, respecting the secular character and measures of the Assemblies. 'Afterward,' referring as I understand him to this period, 'our work in public was too much in sequestration of estates, fining and imprisoning, more than in a compassionate mournfulness of spirit toward those whom we saw to oppose the work. In our Assemblies we were more to set up a state opposite to a state; more upon forms, citations, leading of witnesses, suspensions from benefices, than spiritually to persuade and work upon the conscience with the meekness and gentleness of Christ. The glory and royalty of our princely Redeemer and King was trampled on, as any might have seen in our Assemblies. What way the army, and the sword, and the countenance of nobles and officers seemed to sway, that way were the censures carried. It had been better had there been more days of humiliation and fasting, and far less adjourning commissions, new peremptory summonses, and new drawn-up processes.'[h]

If from the clergy and church courts, we pass to the people, the view of them given by the friends of the church will not appear more favourable. 'What,' asks Mr. Binning, 'is now the great blot of our visible church? Here it is, the most part are not God's children but called so; and it is the greater blot that they are called so, and are not.'[i]

[g] Binning's works, Edin. 1735, p. 518.
[h] Rutherford's Testimony, Edin. 1713.
[i] Binning's works, p. 518.

Addressing them again, he says, 'Set aside your public service, and professions, and is there any thing behind in your conversation, but drunkenness, lying, swearing, contention, envy, deceit, wrath, covetousness, and such like? Have not the multitude been as civil, and carried themselves as blamelessly as the throng of our visible church? What have ye more than they? What then are the most part of you? Ye neither bow a knee in secret nor in your families to God.'[k] If Principal Baillie's words already quoted, have any meaning, not more than one in 'forty of the members of his church gave good evidence of grace and regeneration.'[l] These testimonies shew that there may be much professed zeal for the Lord of Hosts—much clamorous contention about Confessions of Faith, Forms of Church Government, and extirpation of heretics, and a deplorable degree of ignorance, depravity, and irreligion.

It does not appear that the influence of the English army, and of Cromwell's government, was unfavourable to the state of religion in Scotland. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that true religion was, during this period, in rather a prosperous state. It is true, Cromwell put down the Assemblies, and curbed the spirit of interference with politics which then so much prevailed among the ministers. But he interfered with none of the other rights of the church, and encouraged the profession of the gospel in all ranks. I 'remember well,' says Bishop Burnet, 'of three regiments coming to Aberdeen. There was an order and discipline, and a face of gravity and piety among them, that amazed all people. Most of them were Independents and Anabaptists: they were all gifted men, and preached as they were moved. But they never disturbed the public assemblies in the churches but once. They came and reproached the preachers for laying things to their charge that were false. I was then present: the debate grew very fierce: at last they drew their swords; but there was no hurt done: yet Cromwell displaced the governor for not punishing this.'[m] The power of the church was reduced within a narrower compass; for though it had liberty to excommunicate offenders, or debar them the

[k] Binning's works, p. 546. [l] Baillie's Letters, vol. ii. p. 85.
[m] History of his own times, vol. i. p. 80.

communion, it might not seize their estates, or deprive them of their civil rights and privileges. No oaths or covenants were to be imposed, but by direction from Westminster; and as all fitting encouragement was to be given to ministers of the Established Church; so others, not satisfied with their form of Church Government, had liberty to serve God after their own manner. This occasioned a great commotion among the clergy, who complained of the loss of their covenant and church discipline; and exclaimed against toleration as opening a door to all kinds of error and heresy: but the English supported their friends against all opposition.[n]

But the strongest testimony to the prosperous condition of religion in Scotland is from the pen of James Kirkton, afterwards one of the ministers of Edinburgh; who, from his opportunities was well able to judge, and from his sentiments as a Presbyterian, unlikely to overrate the salutary influence of the measures of the commonwealth. 'They did indeed,' he says, 'proclaim a sort of toleration to Dissenters among Protestants, but permitted the gospel to have its course, and Presbyteries and Synods to continue in the exercise of their powers; and all the time of their government, the gospel prospered not a little, *but mightily*. It is also true, that because the generality of the Scottish ministers were for the king upon any terms, therefore they did not permit the General Assembly to sit (and in this I believe they did no bad office), for both the authority of that meeting was denied by the Protesters, and the Assembly seemed to be more set upon establishing themselves than promoting religion.—Errors in some places infected some few; yet were all these losses inconsiderable in regard of the great success the word preached had in sanctifying the people of the nation. *And I verily believe there were more souls converted to Christ in that short period of time, than in any season since the Reformation, though of triple its duration.* Nor was there ever greater purity and plenty of the means of grace than was in their time. Ministers were painful, people were diligent; and if a man had seen one of their solemn communions, where many congregations met in great multitudes; some dozen of ministers

[n] Neal, vol. iv. p. 54.

used to preach, and the people continued as it were in a kind of trance (so serious were they in spiritual exercises), for three days at least, he would have thought it a solemnity unknown to the rest of the world.—At the king's return every parish had a minister, every village had a school, *every family almost had a Bible,* yea in most of the country *all the children could read the Scriptures, and were provided with Bibles,* either by their parents or their ministers.'[o]

Nothing requires to be added to these testimonies. When the state of things thus described, is contrasted with the condition of Scotland during the whole government of the last four Stuarts, it will not be difficult for any one to determine whether the reign of legitimate and covenanted royalty to which the people were so devoted, or the government of a despised and constantly opposed usurpation, deserved most respect. It will also appear, that the meetings and enactments of political, intriguing General Assemblies were by no means so necessary to the advancement of true religion as many have supposed. Justice also to the party, with which Owen was most closely connected, required that I should shew that its measures and influence were generally favourable to the interests of Christianity.

Owen continued with the army in Scotland till early in 1651, when he returned to his family and flock at Coggeshall. There, however, he was not allowed long to rest. According to the order which passed the House of Commons more than a year before, to prefer Owen and Goodwin to be heads of Colleges in Oxford, Goodwin was now raised to the Presidency of Magdalen College, and Owen made Dean of Christ Church. The first notice he received of this was the appearance of the following order in the newspapers of the day. 'On the 18th March, 1651, the House taking into consideration the worth and usefulness of John Owen, M. A. of Queen's College, ordered that he be settled in the Deanery of Christ's Church, in room of Dr. Reynolds.' Reynolds had been put into the Deanery of Christ Church, and the Vice-Chancellorship of the University by the Presbyterian party; but refusing to take the engagement to be true to the Government established with-

[o] Kirkton's History of the Church of Scotland, pp. 54, 55—64.

out King or House of Lords, he was deprived; and though, to save the Deanery, he sometime after offered to take the engagement, the Parliament, offended at his conduct, took advantage of the forfeiture, and conferred it on Owen.[p] Baxter says it had previously been offered to Caryl, who refused it;[q] but of this no evidence appears. Soon after Owen's appointment was made public, he received a letter from the principal students at Christ Church, expressing their great satisfaction at the appointment, and their desire that he would come among them. Accordingly, with the consent of the Church, he resigned his pastoral office, and took up his residence in Oxford in the course of the same year.[r]

Christ Church College is one of the best foundations in Oxford. It was erected by Cardinal Wolsey, and though it has since undergone many changes, it still remains a monument of the greatness of that ambitious Churchman. The establishment consists of a Dean, eight Canons, eight Chaplains, and one hundred students, with inferior officers. The office of the Dean is to preside at all meetings of the College, and to deliver Divinity Lectures. In the hierarchy, he is next in dignity to the Bishop of Oxford; and the appointment is in the Crown. During the commonwealth the ecclesiastical functions of the office, and the connexion with the church, must have been suspended; but the temporalities of the Deanery were not sequestrated along with the other Dean and Chapter lands.[s] This was probably on account of its relation to the University. The emoluments of the office are now very considerable, and must have been so even in the time of the commonwealth.

Owen's account of this appointment and of himself are characterised by his usual modesty, and Christian humility. 'I now clearly found that I who dreaded almost every academical employment, as being unequal to the task, and at a time too when I had entertained hope, that through the goodness of God, in giving me leisure and retirement, and strength for study, that the deficiency of genius and penetration, might be made up by industry and diligence, was now so circumstanced that the career of my

[p] Neal, vol. iv. p. 27. [q] Life and Times, part i. p. 64. [r] Mem. p. x.
[s] Neal, vol. iv. 14.

studies must be interrupted by more and greater impediments than ever. For what could be expected from a man not far advanced in years, and who had for some time been very full of employment, and accustomed only to the popular mode of speaking; and who being entirely devoted to the investigation of the grace of God through Jesus Christ, had taken leave of all scholastic studies; whose genius is by no means quick, and who had even forgot, in some measure, the portion of polite learning that he might have formerly acquired? The most weighty and important task of lecturing in public, was put upon me, which would strictly and properly require the whole time and attention of the most grave and experienced divine; and in the discharge of which, unless I had been greatly assisted and encouraged by the candour, piety, submission, and self-denial of the auditors, and by their respect for the Divine institution, and their love of the truth with every kind of indulgence to the earthen vessel; I had long lost all hope of discharging that province, either to the public advantage or my own satisfaction and comfort.'[t]

It appears at first rather surprising, that an Independent should have accepted an office that has always been reckoned part of the ecclesiastical establishment; but both Baptists and Independents were then in the practice of accepting the livings, that is, the temporalities of the Church. They did not, however, view themselves as parish ministers, and bound to administer all the ordinances of religion to the parish population. They occupied the parochial edifices, and received a portion of the tithes for their maintenance; but in all other respects acted according to their own principles. The times were unsettled, the Episcopal clergy were thrown out by the state, either on account of their principles or their conduct, the funds of the church were not otherwise disposed of, and as the Dissenters were discharging the duties of public teachers, many of them, among whom was Owen, considered it lawful to receive a portion of those provisions to which no other class of men had then a better claim. That this state of things would soon have introduced very serious evils among them, cannot be doubted; but these were prevented by another re-

[t] Pref. Ad Div. Jus.

volution, which restored Episcopacy, and threw the Dissenters on their own resources. The Dean of Christ Church, however, was no farther connected with the Establishment, than as President of his College, he held a situation of important influence, and was legally entitled to the support attached to his office. That he never sought the office, that he was actually averse to it, he himself solemnly assures us. 'The Parliament of England promoted me, while diligently employed in preaching the gospel, by their authority and influence, though with reluctance on my part, to a Chair in the celebrated University of Oxford.'[u] From such declarations, and the former disinterestedness of his conduct, we are bound to believe that a sense of duty alone induced him to accept the Academic Chair. But that he and his brethren who accepted of the livings of the Church, exposed themselves not unfairly to the charge of inconsistency preferred against them by Milton, I freely acknowledge. That eloquent writer, with his usual energy, declared, 'That he hated that Independents should take that name, as they may justly from their freedom of Christian doctrine, and church discipline subject to no superior judge but God only; and seek to be *Dependents* on the magistrates for their maintenance: which two things *Independence and State hire* in religion, can never consist long or certainly together. For magistrates at one time or other, will pay none but such, whom by their committees of examination they find conformable to their interests and opinions. And hirelings will soon frame themselves to that interest, and those opinions which they see best pleasing to their paymasters: and to seem right themselves, will force others as to the truth.'[x]

The Dean of Christ Church was called to preach before Parliament on the 24th of October 1651, being the thanksgiving day appointed for the destruction of the Scotish army at Worcester, 'with sundry other mercies.' This celebrated victory, 'the crowning mercy' of Cromwell, completed the ruin of Charles II. the subjugation of Scotland, and established the authority of the commonwealth in the three kingdoms. In the dedication of this sermon to Parliament, the Dean expresses himself very strongly concerning the

[u] Pref. Ad Div. Jos. [x] Prose Works, p. 282.—Symmon's Ed. vol. iii. p. 389.

principles and conduct of the people of Scotland in the war, which the battle of Worcester terminated. 'With what deceiveableness of unrighteousness, and lies in hypocrisy, the late grand attempt in Scotland was carried on, is in some measure now made naked, to the loathing of its abominations. In digging deep to lay a foundation for blood and revenge, in covering private and sordid ends with a pretence of things glorious, in limning a face of religion upon a worldly stock, in concealing distant aims and bloody animosities, to compass one common end, that a theatre might be provided to act several parts upon, in pleading a necessity from an oath of God to most desperate undertakings against God, it does not give place to any which former ages have been acquainted with.'

The views of Owen on this subject were no doubt influenced by the persons with whom he generally acted; but there were certainly great inconsistencies in the proceedings of the Scotish leaders, and many things very provoking in their conduct to England. Correct religious sentiments, and sound policy would have dictated different measures both towards Charles, and the people of England, from those which they had pursued. The sermon preached on this occasion is entitled, 'The Advantage of the Kingdom of Christ in the Shaking of the Kingdoms of the world, or Providential Alterations in their subserviency to Christ's Exaltation.'[y] It contains many free and eloquent passages, especially on the danger of human governments interfering with the principles and rights of the kingdom of Christ; and on the abomination and extent of the Antichristian apostasy. 'He that thinks Babylon,' says the preacher, 'confined to Rome and its open idolatry, knows nothing of Babylon, nor of the New Jerusalem. The depth of a subtile mystery does not lie in gross visible folly. It has been insinuating itself into all the nations for sixteen hundred years, and to most of them is now become as the marrow in their bones. Before it be wholly shaken out, these heavens (ecclesiastical powers) must be dissolved, and this earth (civil governments) shaken; their tall trees hewed down and set a howling, and the residue of them transplanted from one end of the earth to another.'

[y] Works, vol. xv. p. 415.

Henry Ireton, son-in-law to Cromwell, by Bridget, his eldest daughter, died while Lord Deputy of Ireland, on the 26th of November, 1651; and his body being brought over to England, was buried in Westminster Abbey, on the 6th of February, 1652, with great funeral solemnity. 'If he could have foreseen what was done,' says Ludlow, 'he would certainly have made it his desire, that his body might have found a grave where his soul left it, so much did he despise those pompous and expensive vanities; having erected for himself a more glorious monument, in the hearts of good men, by his affection to his country, his abilities of mind, his impartial justice, his diligence in the public service, and his other virtues, which were a far greater honour to his memory than a dormitory among the ashes of kings.'[a] Owen preached the funeral sermon on this occasion in the Abbey Church of Westminster; which was published with the title of 'The labouring Saint's dismission to his rest,'[b] and dedicated to Col. Henry Cromwell, the youngest son of the Protector. It is difficult to ascertain the true character of Ireton. According to Burnet, 'he had the principles and temper of a Cassius.' Noble represents him as the most artful, dark, deliberate man of all the republicans, by whom he was in the highest degree beloved.[c] And Hume acknowledges that he was a memorable personage, much celebrated for his vigilance, industry, and capacity. That he was a man of talents and disinterestedness, is admitted by all parties; that he was a republican need not be denied; that he was a man of piety there is strong reason to believe. The testimony of Ludlow, who must have known him well, is highly honourable; that of Heath, though intended as a reproach, is scarcely less to his credit,—'He was absolutely the best prayer-maker and preacher in the army, for which he may thank his education at Oxford.'[d] To deserve this character in an army of praying and preaching men, argued no ordinary attainments of a religious nature. Owen, who must have known him intimately, expresses in the conclusion of this discourse, his opinion of this republican hero. 'My business is not to make a funeral oration; only I suppose that

[a] Ludlow's Mem. vol. i. p. 331. Ed. 1751. [b] Works, vol. xv. p. 450.
[c] Mem. of the Protect. House of Cromwell, vol. ii. p. 298. [d] Flagellum, p. 124.

without offence I may desire—that in courage and permanency of business (which I name in opposition to that unsettled, pragmatical, shuffling disposition, which is in some men), in ability for wisdom and counsel, in faithfulness to his trust and in his trust, in indefatigable industry in the pursuit of the work committed to him, in faith on the promises of God and acquaintance with his mind in his mighty works of providence, in love to the Lord Jesus and all his saints, in a tender regard to their interest, delight in their society, contempt of himself and all his for the gospel's sake, with eminent self-denial in all his concernments, in impartiality and sincerity in the execution of justice—that in these and the like things, we may have many raised up in the power and spirit wherein he walked before the Lord, and the inhabitants of this nation.'

On the thirteenth of October following, he was again called to preach before the House on a day of solemn humiliation. In one passage of this sermon which is entitled, 'Christ's Kingdom and the Magistrate's Power,'[e] we have a striking picture of the unsettled, chaotic state of religion during this period of confusion. 'What now, by the lust of men, is the state of things? Say some, there is no gospel at all. Say others, if there be, you have nothing to do with it. Some say, lo here is Christ; others, lo there. Some make religion a colour for one thing, others for another. Say some, the magistrate must not support the gospel; say others, the gospel must subvert the magistrate. Some say, your rule is only for men as men, you have nothing to do with the interest of Christ and his Church; others say, you have nothing to do to rule men, but on account of their being saints. If you will have the gospel, say some, down with the ministers of it; and if you will have light, take care that you may have ignorance and darkness. Things being carried on as if it were the care of men, that there might be no trouble in the world, but that the name of religion might lie in the bottom of it.'

It is surely gross injustice to charge the man who thus strongly regrets and deprecates the religious confusion of the times, as one of the leading instruments of producing that confusion. Owen always had correct views of the

[e] Works, vol. xv. p. 476.

importance and necessity of order; and neither his sentiments nor conduct necessarily produced disorder either in church or state. But it is no strange thing for the greatest benefactors of their country, to be rewarded with reproach and misrepresentation.

CHAP. VI.

Division of the Memoirs at this period—Owen made Vice-Chancellor—Attends a Meeting in London, called by Cromwell to promote union—Created D. D.—Elected M. P. for the University—Cromwell's Instrument of Government—Debate about the Construction of the Article respecting Religious Liberty—Remarks on Neal's account of it, and the Meeting of Ministers respecting it—Owen appointed an Ejecting Commissioner and Tryer—Conduct of the Tryers—Owen delivers Pococke—Baxter's account of the Tryers—Owen's measures for securing Oxford—Correspondence with Thurloe—Attends a Meeting at Whitehall about the Jews—Preaches at the Opening of a New Parliament—Again on a Fast day—Assists in defeating Cromwell's attempt to make himself King—Deprived of the Vice-Chancellorship.

As the period during which Owen was Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, was by far the busiest and most important of his life, it will be proper to arrange our memoirs of its transactions, in such a manner as shall exhibit a correct view of his general conduct, his connexions with the University, and his several publications. Each of these topics, therefore, will form the subject of a distinct chapter.

Oliver Cromwell was chosen Chancellor of Oxford in the month of January, 1651; but being mostly in Scotland with the army, and finding it inconvenient to attend to the affairs of the University, he, in the following year, delegated the Dean of Christ Church and some other heads of Houses, to manage every thing which required his consent as Chancellor of the University. By letters, dated the ninth September, 1652, he nominated Owen to be Vice-Chancellor in the room of Dr. Dan. Greenwood; and on the twenty-sixth of the same month, he was accordingly chosen by the unanimous suffrage of the Senate;[a] 'notwithstanding his urgent request to the contrary.' He speaks of himself as having undertaken this difficult office in deference

[a] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 777.

to the opinions, the solicitations, and the commands of the leading men of the University, and in the State, by whom it had been in a great measure forced upon him. 'By accepting of which,' he declares, 'he had knowingly sacrificed his peace, and all his studious pursuits.[b] Full credit will be allowed him for sincerity in these declarations, when the circumstances of the University, which will afterwards be noticed, are brought forward.

On the 25th of August, 1653, he was engaged, along with Mr. Cradock, in preaching before Parliament on occasion of the thanksgiving for the defeat of the Dutch fleet commanded by Van Trump and De Wit. The British fleet was under General Monke, who took and destroyed twenty-six of the enemy. This victory contributed to raise the celebrity of the arms of the Commonwealth, and to pave the way for the peace with Holland which took place the following year.[c]

In the month of October, 1653, the Vice-Chancellor was called to London by Cromwell, to attend a meeting of ministers of various denominations, for the purpose of considering their differences of sentiment, and of devising, if possible, some plan of union. The following curious account is given of this meeting in the newspapers of the day. 'Several ministers were treated with by his Excellency, the Lord Gen. Cromwell, to persuade them that hold Christ the Head, and so the same in fundamentals, to agree in love, that there be no such divisions among people, professing godliness, as hath been, nor railing or reviling each other for difference only in forms. There were Mr. Owen, Mr. Marshall, (Presbyterian,) Mr. Nye, (Independent,) Mr. Jessey, (Baptist,) Mr. Harrison, and others, to whom the advice and counsel of his Excellency was so sweet, so precious, and managed with such judgment and graciousness, that it is hoped it will much tend to persuade those that fear the Lord in spirit and truth, to labour the union of all God's people.'[d]

Whether this was a serious proposal of Cromwell, or a political attempt to discover, through the medium of their leaders, the sentiments of the various sects, or a mere hy-

[b] Pref. Ad Jus. Div. [c] Heath's Chron. p. 349.
[d] Papers collected in the Cromwelliana.

pocritical farce, got up for the sake of producing a particular effect, I pretend not to determine. It does not appear that the persons who were themselves consulted, suspected any evil, and perhaps none was intended. Nothing of importance, however, resulted from the meeting. It is much easier to propose plans of union, than to carry them into effect. Religious differences will never be healed by state interference, or political management. The most likely way to effect it, is by teaching men to respect the supreme and exclusive authority of the word of God, and by leaving every individual to follow the dictates of his conscience respecting it. Peace and union are desirable; but not at the expense of truth and principle.

While in London about this business, the University conferred on him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. The diploma is dated the 22d December, 1653, and describes him as 'In Palaestra Theologica exercitatissimus, in concionando assiduus et potens, in disputando strenuus et acutus,' &c. His friend, Thomas Goodwin, President of Magdalen College, was diplomated at the same time, and described as 'In scriptis in re Theologica quam plurimis orbi notus.'[e] Many of the early reformers were decidedly opposed to Theological degrees. Carlostadt refused to submit to the title of Doctor, and chose rather the designation of Brother Andrew. Zuinglius could not hear the title without horror. Grynaeus, Sebastian Munster, and Myconius never assumed it: the last, indeed, when urged to accept the degree, as required by a law of the University, offered rather to resign his professorship than submit to it. Melancthon and Oporinus also, both refused to accept of it. All these learned men seem to have thought such distinctions inconsistent with obedience to our Lord's injunction, Matt. xxiii. 8—10.[f] Erasmus, with his usual jocularity, said, 'The title of Doctor makes a man neither wiser nor better.' It is gratifying to be able to give the sentiments of Owen on this subject. At the time in which he flourished, such degrees were not so common as they have since become, and most of those who received, probably deserved, as far as learning and theological attain-

[e] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. pp. 782, 783.
[f] Werenfelsii Opuscula, pp. 304, 305.—Hornbeek, Sum. Cont. pp. 754. 756.

ments go, to enjoy them. But Owen submitted to the honour with great reluctance. Cawdry, in one of his attacks on him, insinuates that he had been offended by his not calling him constantly, reverend Author and reverend Doctor. To this insinuation Owen replies with great spirit. 'Let this reverend author make what use of it he pleases, I cannot but again tell him, that these insinuations become neither him nor any man professing the religion of Jesus Christ, or that hath any respect to truth or sobriety. Can any man think that in his conscience he gives any credit to the insinuation which he here makes, that I should thank him for calling me reverend Author or reverend Doctor? For the title of reverend, I do give him notice that I have very little valued it, ever since I have considered the saying of Luther; "Nunquam periclitatur religio nisi inter Reverendissimos." So that he may as to me, forbear it for the future, and call me as the Quakers do, and it shall suffice. And for that of Doctor, it was conferred on me by the University in my *absence*, and against my *consent*, as they have expressed it under their public seal; nor doth any thing but gratitude and respect to them make me once own it; and freed from that obligation I should never use it more. Nor did I use it until some were offended with me, and blamed me for my neglect of them.'[g]

Cromwell having dissolved the Long Parliament, found it necessary to call another in the year 1654. A writ being issued to the University of Oxford to make choice of but one burgess to represent it, on the 27th of June, Dr. Owen was chosen the representative. The parliament met on the 3d of September following; but his election being questioned by the Committee of privileges on account of his being in the ministry, he sat only for a short time.[h] This part of Owen's conduct occasioned some infamous misrepresentations. Cawdry asserted, that 'when he was chosen a parliament-man, he refused to answer whether he was a minister or not;'[i] and the truth of this he rested on the 'vox populi'—public rumour of Oxford. Wood improves the story, and declares, that 'rather than he would be put aside because he was a theologist, he renounced his orders,

[g] Preface to Cotton's Defence. [h] Wood's Fasti, edited by Gutch, p. 192.
[i] Independency further proved to be a schism.

and pleaded that he was a mere layman, notwithstanding he had been actually created D. D. in the year before.'[k] This is carrying the matter to the climax of absurdity and villany. To what purpose ask the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, and Dean of Christ Church, whether he was a minister? Did not all the world know it? Was it practicable for the Doctor to renounce his profession, had he been disposed? Need we then wonder at his indignant reply to Cawdry? 'My refusal to answer whether I were a minister, or not, on any occasion in the world, is "purum putum mendacium," a scandalous, malignant falsehood; so is it no truer that it was "vox populi" at Oxford, as is pretended.'[l] And having occasion to refer to it again, he says, 'It is notoriously untrue, and so remote from any thing to give a pretence or colour to it, that I question whether Satan have impudence enough to own himself its author.'[m] The anonymous writer of the life of South, published in 1721, repeats the story of Owen's renunciation, and ascribes to Dr. South, the merit of 'so managing matters with the doctors, bachelors of divinity, and masters of arts, the electors, that he was returned with great difficulty, and, after a few days sitting, had his election declared null and void, because his renunciation was not reputed valid.'[n]

What the Doctor's reasons were for wishing to become a member of parliament, cannot now be ascertained. He probably considered himself as holding no clerical office during his Vice-chancellorship. He might think it was as lawful for him to be a member of parliament as to hold a civil office in Oxford; and that in this situation, he might be able to render important service to the university, which then stood in need of all the friends it could muster. As only one member was to be chosen, he was, perhaps, the fittest person at the time to represent that learned body; and in all probability he was urged to accept of the situation, both by Cromwell and the electors, till he could not refuse. Those who reproached him for it, ought to have shewn that there was something unlawful in it, or that he acted from improper motives. They who claim for bishops a seat in the house of lords, can have no religious scruples

[k] Athen. Ox. ii. 557. [l] Pref. to Cot. Def. [m] Ibid. [n] Ibid.

at a minister going into parliament. And I need not hesitate to assert, that few, comparatively, of the ecclesiastical legislators of Great Britain, have been fitter for the office than Dr. John Owen.[o]

To this assembly, Oliver presented his Instrument of Government—'A creature of Cromwell's, and his council of officers,' says Neal, 'and not drawn up by a proper representative of the people.'[p] This is not very consistent with that historian's exclamation against the defectiveness of the 'Independents' instrument of government under Cromwell.' It could not be the work of the Independents, unless they are to be made accountable for every thing done by Cromwell and his officers, which would be manifestly unjust.

This Instrument provided, 'That such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship, or discipline publicly held forth, shall not be restrained from, but shall be protected in the profession of their faith, and exercise of their religion, so as they abuse not this liberty to the civil injury of others, and to the actual disturbance of the public peace on their parts; provided this liberty be not extended to popery or prelacy, or to such, as under a profession of Christ, hold forth and practise licentiousness.'[q] This act of toleration, though by no means perfect, discovers considerable enlargement of mind; and it would have been well for the country, had the proceedings of its parliaments been always as liberal. Popery and prelacy were excluded, not as religious, so much as political systems; and because their adherents were constantly plotting against the Protector's government: and even in regard to them, the laws were more *in terrorem*, than intended for execution.

In the debate which arose in Parliament, on the article

[o] In the humble petition and advice presented to Cromwell in 1657, an article was proposed to be inserted, to prohibit preachers from being Members of Parliament. To this Oliver objected, as he alleged 'he had been a preacher himself, and so had many officers of the army, by whom much good had been done.' In consequence of this the article was omitted, and the ancient laws of Parliament left as formerly. Heath's Chron. p. 409. Whitelock, p. 678. In the parliament preceding that in which Owen sat, Dr. Jonathan Goddard, Warden of Merton College, was one of the members for Oxford. Heath, p. 351. An amusing view of the grounds on which a man who has been once in holy orders is excluded from the House of Commons, is given in the Diversions of Purly, by John Horne Tooke, who was excluded Parliament on that account.

[p] Neal's Puritans, vol. iv. p. 76. [q] Ibid. iv. p. 74.

of this Instrument now quoted, it was contended that the clause, 'such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ,' was designed to limit the toleration to such as were agreed on the fundamentals of Christianity. This, I apprehend, Oliver had not contemplated, as a difference in doctrine is the first thing expressed in the article; and the proceedings of the house on this subject seem, by no means, to have gratified him. In whatever way they understood it, it cannot be doubted that the most unrestricted liberty of conscience was intended by the Protector. But in consequence of the debate in the house, a committee of fourteen was appointed to consider *what were fundamentals*, and that committee was empowered to name each a divine, who should meet, and return their opinion on this delicate subject. The ministers who met, were Drs. Owen, Goodwin, and Cheynel; Messrs. Marshal, Reyner, Nye, Simpson, Vines, Manton, Jacomb, and Baxter. After several meetings, they at last returned a list of sixteen articles, in a paper endorsed, 'The principles of faith, presented by Messrs. Thomas Goodwin, Nye, Simpson, and other ministers, to the Committee of Parliament for religion, by way of explanation to the proposals for propagating the gospel.'[r]

Baxter gives a long and tiresome account of this meeting, ascribing the whole work of it to Dr. Owen, assisted by Nye, Goodwin, and Simpson. He assures us there was a great deal of wrangling, of which, by his own account, he was a principal cause. He says, 'Dr. Owen was hotter and better befriended in the assembly than himself;' and that 'he was then under great weakness and soporous, or scotomatical, illness of his head.'[s] He evidently laboured under his constitutional malady, disputacious pertinacity. What is surprising, he takes credit to himself, lover of peace and unity as he professed all his life to be, for defeating the unanimity that would have prevailed had he not been there!

Neal appears to have misunderstood the nature of this meeting, and the design of the framers of these articles. He speaks as if the object of the divines had been to *legislate* on the subject of *toleration*, or to direct the parliament

[r] Neal, iv. pp. 97—102. [s] Baxter's Life, p. ii. pp. 197, 205. Appendix, p. 75.

how far it might proceed in granting liberty of conscience. But the fact is simply this, they were called together by a committee of the house to state, what, in their opinion, was fundamental or essential in Christianity. With the propriety of tolerating those who differed from them on the points of their declaration, they had nothing to do. The use to be made of their paper was no concern of theirs, and to the question proposed to them, they religiously adhered, as they gave no opinion of any kind on the subject of religious liberty. Instead of this, we should conclude from the title of the document, that it was intended for a different purpose, something about the propagation of the gospel. Where then is the occasion for Neal's language about the narrow list of fundamentals, given in by the Independents? So far from its being narrow, it seems to me to be very wide, being almost as general as the apostles' creed. I believe, most Christians would consider that it contained rather too little than too much. 'It appears,' Neal says, 'by these articles, that these divines intended to exclude, not only Deists, Socinians, and Papists, but Arians, Antinomians, Quakers, and others.' Exclude from what? Not from civil privileges, but from holding the essentials of Christianity. 'Into such difficulties do wise and good men fall when they usurp the kingly office of Christ, and pretend to restrain that liberty which is the birth-right of every reasonable creature.' The meeting under consideration, fell into no difficulties, usurped no part of the office of Christ, and did nothing to restrain the liberty of others. 'It is an unwarrantable presumption for any number of men to declare what is fundamental in the Christian religion, any farther than the Scriptures have expressly declared it.' If this sentence means that the Bible alone can decide what is necessary to salvation; every Christian will assent to it. But if it asserts that we have no right to declare what, in our opinion, must be believed in order to salvation, it is excessively absurd. Every man who preaches the gospel is called to declare this. Every society of Christians has a professed or implied belief on the subject; and there can be no impropriety in our giving an answer in any circumstances to what is asked us respecting it. 'Besides,' adds Neal, 'Why should the civil ma-

gistrate protect none but those who profess faith in God by Jesus Christ?' I also ask, why? The ministers were not called to answer it. Who proposed this as the law of toleration? Cromwell and his officers, or the parliament, according to our historian himself![t]

Thus the main proof which has been alleged of the intolerant conduct of Independents, when possessed of power, completely fails; as this meeting, and its acts, had nothing to do with determining the bounds, either of civil or religious liberty. And whatever were its views or conduct, it should be noticed, that the majority of the ministers were Presbyterians. It will not be supposed, that these remarks are intended to vindicate the propriety of putting religious liberty on the footing of even the most enlarged interpretation of Oliver's Instrument. Christianity ought, neither in part nor in whole, to be made the test of civil privileges. It never was intended for any such purpose, and such a use of it is only calculated to corrupt it, by inducing hypocritical professions of belief, and discouraging free inquiry.

In the end of the year 1653, Owen, Goodwin, Caryl, Lockyer, and others, were presented to Parliament to be sent commissioners by three, in a circuit, for ejecting and settling ministers according to rules then prescribed; but this project not taking effect, Commissioners for the approbation of public preachers were afterwards appointed, of whom Owen was one. In 1654, he was one of the Commissioners who were appointed in every county, for ejecting scandalous, ignorant, and insufficient ministers and school-masters.[u] He was, about the same time, appointed one of the visitors for the regulation of the University of Oxford, and for the promotion of the interests of learning in it.[x] These various appointments must have greatly increased his labours, and multiplied opportunities to adversaries to annoy and reproach him.

The Tryers, as they were called, were thirty-eight in number, consisting of Independents, Presbyterians, and Baptists. They were to inquire particularly 'into the grace of God in the candidate, his holy and unblameable conversation, also into his knowledge, and utterance, and fitness to preach the gospel.' Whatever may be thought

[t] Neal, iv. p. 100. [u] Athen. Ox. ii. pp. 556, 557. [x] Scobel's Acts, p. 126.

of government appointing such a board, or of some individuals forming part of it, every Christian will admit that ministers of the gospel ought to possess the above qualifications. The greatest injury to the church of Christ has arisen from the introduction of ignorant and ungodly men into the office of the ministry. In general, the door has been too wide rather than too narrow, and attention to personal or literary qualifications, has often superseded due regard to the more important acquirements of a moral and spiritual nature.

The conduct of the Tryers has been found fault with in various quarters. Neal exclaims against their arbitrary proceedings, and yet, when he comes to detail those proceedings, his account amounts almost to a complete vindication. Their conduct was not, probably, more arbitrary than might be expected from the general nature of their instructions, and the peculiarity of their business. They have been burlesqued, as endeavouring

> 'To find, in lines of beard and face,
> The physiognomy of grace;
> And by the sound of twang and nose
> If all be sound within disclose.'

The most grievous complaints have been uttered, and the most extravagant expressions of astonishment poured out, because they were so fanatical as to speak about grace, regeneration, and experience, as if these were the last things that ought to be spoken of to ministers of the gospel! I am not bound to vindicate their proceedings; they had a difficult task to perform, and had to deal with persons of very different principles, both in religion and in politics; and those who were not approved of, would, of course, complain. Had this power been lodged with the bishops of those times, or their chaplains, or with the high Presbyterians, would they not have had their shibboleth, for which ill-natured men might have called them a holy inquisition?[1]

Of the conduct of Dr. Owen, as one of the ejecting Commissioners, we are able to give a very favourable specimen, in his behaviour to the celebrated Dr. Pococke, Professor of Arabic in Oxford, who was brought before the Commissioners for the county of Berks, on account of

[1] Neal, iv. p. 109.

a living he had there, and was likely to receive hard measure from them. His views of the conduct of these Commissioners will appear from the following extract of a letter to Secretary Thurloe. 'There are in Berkshire some few men of mean quality and condition, rash, heady, enemies of tithes, who are the Commissioners for the ejecting of ministers. They alone sit and act, and are, at this time, casting out, on slight pretences, very worthy men; one especially they intend to eject next week, whose name is Pococke, a man of as unblameable a conversation as any that I know living; of repute for learning throughout the world, being the Professor of Arabic in our university. So that they do exceedingly exasperate all men, and provoke them to the height. If any thing could be done to cause them to suspend acting till this storm be over,[z] I cannot but think it would be good service to his Highness and the Commonwealth.'[a] Not satisfied with writing to Thurloe, accompanied by Drs. Ward, Wilkins, and Wallis, he repaired to the spot where the Commissioners met, where they all laboured with much earnestness to convince them of the strange absurdity of their conduct. Dr. Owen, in particular, with some warmth, endeavoured to make them sensible of the infinite contempt and reproach, which would certainly fall upon them, when it should be said that they had turned out a man for *insufficiency*, whom all the learned, not of England only, but of all Europe, so justly admired for his vast knowledge, and extraordinary accomplishments. And being himself one of the Commissioners appointed by the Act, he added, that he was now come to deliver himself, as well as he could, from a share in such disgrace, by protesting against a proceeding so strangely foolish and unjust. The Commissioners being very much mortified at the remonstrances of so many eminent men, especially of Dr. Owen, in whom they had a particular confidence, thought it best to put an end to the matter, and discharged Pococke from farther attendance.[b]

The conduct of Mr. Howe to Fuller the historian, in somewhat similar circumstances, was no less creditable to his judgment and liberality.[c] So much for the arbitrary

[z] Penruddock's Rising. [a] Thurloe's State Papers, vol. iii. p. 781.
[b] Pococke's Life, prefixed to his Works, p. 41.
[c] Calamy's Life of Howe, pp. 20, 21.

proceedings of *some* of the Independent Tryers. If we may judge of the necessity of a measure, and the wisdom of its management from the results, we should form a very favourable opinion of this appointment by the Protector. Baxter, who was none of the Commissioners himself, nor any friend of their proceedings, acknowledges that 'They saved many a congregation from ignorant, ungodly, drunken teachers:—that sort of men that intend no more in the ministry than to say a sermon, as readers say their common prayers, and so patch a few good words together to talk the people asleep on Sunday; and all the rest of the week go with them to the ale-house, and harden them in their sin:—and that sort of ministers, that either preached against a holy life, or preached as men that never were acquainted with it:—all those who used the ministry as a common trade to live by, and were never likely to convert a soul:—all these they usually rejected, and in their stead admitted any that were able, serious preachers, and lived a godly life, of what tolerable opinion soever they were. So that though many of them were somewhat partial to the Independents, Separatists, Fifth Monarchy men, and Anabaptists, and against the Prelatists and Arminians; yet, so great was the benefit above the hurt, which they brought to the church, that many thousands of souls blessed God for the faithful ministers whom they let in, and grieved when the Prelatists afterwards turned them out again.'[d]

In the year 1655, considerable dissatisfaction with Cromwell's government existed in different parts of the country, and a day of general rising for the royalists was appointed. In the West, the conspiracy actually burst forth, headed by the unfortunate Colonel Penruddock, who, with several others, shortly after suffered for his conduct. The vigilance and resolution of the Protector and his friends crushed this dangerous conspiracy. On this occasion the Vice-chancellor of Oxford exerted all his energy and influence to preserve the public peace, and to support the existing government. In the same letter to Secretary Thurloe, from which I have made an extract, he says, 'We are here in a quiet condition. I have raised, and now well settled, a troop of sixty horse, besides their officers.

[d] Baxter's Life, part i. p. 72.

The town also has raised some foot for their defence. We have some persons in custody on very good grounds of suspicion, and shall yet secure them. There is much riding to and fro in the villages near us; but, as yet, I cannot learn any certain place of their meeting; so I keep a continual guard, and hope some good service has been effected by our arming ourselves. The [Gentlemen] of the county have met, are backward and cold; but something we have gotten them to engage for, toward the raising of some troops. Had I a blank commission or two for horse, I could, as I suppose on good grounds, raise a troop in Berkshire; sundry good ministers, and others, have been with me to assist you to that purpose. If you think it necessary to have the work go on, as surely it is to engage men in such a city as this, wherein self-preservation helps on the public interest; pray send me down one or two commissions to the purpose.'[e] The newspapers of the period record, that Dr. Owen had been very active in securing the county, and that the university had raised a troop of horse under Captain Kent.

Foreign as such pursuits must have been to his habits, and disagreeable, as they could not fail to be, to his feelings, they discover his active disposition, and his public spirit, and shew how determinedly he endeavoured to discharge the trust which, as Vice-chancellor of the university, was committed to him. They afforded, however, a most gratifying opportunity to his adversaries to abuse him, and were long after remembered to his disadvantage. 'When those loyal gentlemen of the west,' says a most virulent reviler, 'made an attempt to redeem their native soil from the bondage of their Cromwellian taskmasters, how did this Cromwellian Doctor, rather like a Major-General than Vice-chancellor, carry God in his scabbard, and religion at his sword's point? How did he make his beadles exchange their staves for fighting irons? How did he turn his gown into a cloak, and vaunt it with white powder in his hair, and black in his pocket, threatening every one with disaffection to the government who would not join with him in his designs? And so he rode up and down like a spiritual Abaddon, breathing out nothing against those

[e] Thurloe's State Papers, iii. p. 281.

brave souls but rage and fury, slaughter and blood.'[f] The charge of carrying a sword, the Doctor repelled by coolly declaring, that, 'to his remembrance, he never wore a sword in his life.'[g]

About this time, I find him corresponding with Thurloe, and Cromwell himself, respecting his neighbour, Mr. Unton Crooke, of Merton in Oxfordshire, whose son was very active in Penruddock's affair; for which his father was made a Sergeant at Law, and himself liberally rewarded.[h] In a letter to Thurloe, dated May 29th, 1655, the Doctor refers to a conversation with the Secretary respecting this gentleman, and speaks of him as worthy of a trust, the nature of which he does not explain, though I suppose it refers to his being made Sergeant. For in a letter to Cromwell, dated October 2d, 1655, he speaks of Crooke in this capacity, refers to the Protector's favour to him not long before, in his request on his behalf; and puts in a petition, that as Cromwell was about to make some new judges, he might be thought of for that employment, as a man of abilities and integrity.[i] I do not find that Crooke was made a judge; but the correspondence shews the habits of intimacy on which Owen lived with the Protector, and the influence he was supposed to possess.

On the 12th of December this year, the Doctor was called to attend a conference respecting the Jews. It was held in a drawing-room at Whitehall, in the presence of his Highness; who laid before the council the proposal of Manasseh Ben Israel, a Spanish Jew, resident in Holland, for permission to his countrymen to settle and trade in England. The meeting consisted of two judges, seven citizens of London; among whom were the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs, and fourteen divines; among whom were Dr. Owen, Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Whichcot, Dr. Cudworth, Mr. Bridge, and Mr. Cradock. The judges considered their toleration merely as a point of law, declared they knew of no law against it; and that, if it were thought useful to the state, they would advise it. The citizens viewed it in a commercial light, and, as probably they had different trade interests, they were divided in their

[f] Letter to a Friend, p. 13. [g] Reflections on a Libel.
[h] Noble's Memoirs, ii. p. 533. Ludlow, ii. pp. 71, 72.
[i] Thurloe's State Papers, vol. iv. pp. 65, 66.

opinions about its utility. Both these, however, despatched the matter briefly; but most of the divines violently opposed it, by text after text, for four whole days. Cromwell became at length wearied, and told them he had hoped they would throw some light on the subject to direct his conscience: but, instead of this, they had rendered it more obscure than before. He desired, therefore, no more of their counsels; but, lest he should do any thing rashly, he begged a share in their prayers.[k] Sir Paul Ricaut, who was then a young man, pressed in among the crowd, and said he never heard a man speak so well in his life, as Cromwell did on that occasion.[l]

What part Owen took in this debate we are not informed; but as some of the ministers would have admitted the Jews into England on certain conditions, it is probable he was of this number. The Protector's views of the subject, on religious grounds, were far from fanatical—'Since the conversion of the Jews was promised in Scripture, he did not know but the preaching of the gospel in England without idolatry, or superstition, might conduce to it.' The project failed, but Manasseh received £200 from the public purse for his trouble.

On the 17th September, 1656, the Doctor preached a Sermon in Westminster Abbey, at the opening of a new parliament, which the Protector had called for the purpose of confirming his title to the supreme magistracy, in a more constitutional manner than had yet been done. The Sermon (for which he received the thanks of the House next day by Sir John Berkstead, and Mr. Maidstone, the steward of the Protector's household),[m] was published with a dedication, as usual, to Cromwell and the parliament, under the title of 'God's work in founding Zion, and his people's duty thereupon.'[n] In the course of it, he expresses his feelings on account of the deliverance which God had wrought for his people very strongly. 'The people of God in this nation,' he exclaims, 'were despised, but are now in esteem; they were under subjection to cruel taskmasters, some in prisons, some banished to the ends of the earth, merely for the worship of their God; the consciences of

[k] Public Intel. for Dec. 12th, 1656. Whitelocke's Mem. p. 618. Neal iv. pp. 140—142. Dr. Tovey's Anglia Judaica. [l] Spence's Anecdotes, p. 216.
[m] Heath's Chronicle, p. 382. [n] Works, vol. xv. p. 512.

all enthralled; while iniquity and superstition were established by law. But now, the imprisoned are set at liberty; the banished are recalled; they that lay among the pots have got dove's wings; conscience is no more enthralled; their sacrifices are not mixed with their blood; nor do they meet with trembling to worship God. O ye messengers of the nations, this is what the Lord hath done!' Every real Christian must have exulted at the revolution in religion which had taken place; and must have been grateful to the instruments by which it had been effected, whatever were their motives or characters. His enlightened ideas of religious liberty are stated with great precision in this discourse. After noticing what various parties wished the magistrate to do, he thus states his own wishes:—'That the people of God be delivered from the hands of their cruel enemies, that they may serve the Lord all the days of their lives;—that notwithstanding their differences, they may live peaceably one with, or at least, by another, *enjoying rule and promotion as they are fitted for employment*, and as he gives promotion in whose hand it is;—that godliness, and the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, be preserved, protected, and secured from the hand of violence upon it.' I question, whether the most enlightened advocate of the duties of government, and the liberties of men, could state the subject in more appropriate language than this. The government of Britain has not yet granted all that the enlarged mind of Owen grasped; but in what has been obtained, an earnest is enjoyed of the ultimate triumph of principle and liberty: when test, and corporation, and even toleration acts, shall all be abrogated;—when civil distinctions, on account of religious differences, shall for ever cease;—when the peculiar privileges of ecclesiastical corporations shall be set aside, and the names of churchman and dissenter shall occur only in the vocabularies of obsolete terms;—when the great body politic shall consist of men of every religious name, united by the grand and harmonizing principle, that conscience is uncontrolable by human laws, and that to worship God according to its dictates, is the undoubted, unalienable, and most sacred right of every rational creature.

I find Owen preaching again before parliament on the

30th of October following; being a day of humiliation. The discourse, for which he received the thanks of the house, by Major-General Kelsey, is entitled, 'God's presence with a people the spring of their prosperity.'[o] I do not observe any thing particularly deserving of notice in it, but his pleading very earnestly towards the conclusion, for the protection and freedom of the people of God, of all parties; and his directing the attention of parliament to the religious state of Wales. 'Where,' he says, 'the unhappiness of almost all men running into extremes, hath disadvantaged the progress of the gospel, when we had great ground for the expectation of better things. Some are still zealous for the traditions of their fathers, and nothing almost will satisfy them, but their old road of beggarly readers in every parish. Others again, perhaps out of a good zeal, have hurried the people with violence beyond their principles, and sometimes it may be beyond the truth. Between complaints on the one side and the other, between misguided zeal and formality, the whole work is almost cast to the ground;—the business of Zion, as such, is scarce by any cared for.' The parliament had not been inattentive to the interests of religion in Wales; though its measures may not always have been productive of benefit to the people. The scandalous and ignorant clergy had been ejected. Instead of them, one hundred and fifty good preachers were planted in the thirteen Welsh counties, most of whom preached three or four times a-week. In every market-town there was a schoolmaster, and in most great towns two. Six preachers were appointed to itinerate in each county, who were indefatigable in their labours; and the whole tithes of the principality were devoted to these purposes, directed by act of parliament.[p] So that, considering the previous character of the clergy; the mountainous and thinly peopled state of the country; and the difficulty of finding suitable persons who could instruct the people in Welsh, perhaps all was done that human instrumentality at the time could effect.

For a series of years, the love of rule and of power had continually increased in the breast of Oliver Cromwell. The dissolution of the long parliament, the calling and

[o] Works, vol. xv. p. 547. [p] Neal, iv. pp. 116. 120.

dispersing of other packed assemblies, and the frequent changes of the form of government, seem all to have been preparatory to his laying hands on the regal sceptre, and assuming the forms and titles of majesty. His last parliament was undoubtedly called for the purpose of sanctioning this concluding act of his ambition. From the manner in which it had been collected it was easily managed; and on the proposal being made, that the Protector should have the crown with the title of king, it was soon agreed to by a considerable majority. A committee was appointed to persuade him to accept it, which presented the offer in the form of a petition, on the fourth of April. There was another party, however, more difficult to manage than the parliament, and whose sanction was then fully more necessary. This was composed chiefly of the officers of the army; among whom were General Fleetwood and Colonel Desborough, the former, son-in-law, and the latter, brother-in-law to the Protector. They were most decidedly opposed to this measure; and, from their influence in the army, Cromwell found it necessary to court their favour. Still, nothing was likely to prevent his taking this foolish step. He had actually appointed the house to meet him for this purpose, on the following morning, when an occurrence took place which blasted for ever his ambitious designs.

Having met Colonel Desborough in the park, Cromwell acquainted him with his resolution; on which Desborough frankly told him, that he gave him and his family up for lost, and that he would not continue to act with him any longer. When Desborough went home, he found Colonel Pride, whom Cromwell had knighted with a faggot, to whom he imparted the information he had received. Pride exclaimed, 'He shall not.' 'But how will you prevent it,' rejoined Desborough.—'Get me a petition drawn up, and I will blast it,' was the reply. On this they both went to Dr. Owen, and having acquainted him with what was going on, persuaded him to draw up the petition for them. Next morning it was presented to the house by Colonel Mason, and some other officers, and set forth—'That they had hazarded their lives against monarchy, and were still ready to do so, in defence of the liberties of the nation:—that

having observed in some men great endeavours to bring the nation again under the old servitude, by pressing their General to take upon him the title and government of king, in order to destroy him, and weaken the hands of those who were faithful to the public; they, therefore, humbly desired they would discountenance all such persons and endeavours, and continue steadfast to the old cause.' This petition being supported by the majority of the officers in town, at once involved the house and Cromwell in the utmost perplexity. But that sagacious politician, on discovering how things were likely to go, declined, with great ostentation of self-denial, the title of king, and accepted of his pomp and power, under the less common, but expressive designation of PROTECTOR.[q]

This disappointment was not likely to be forgotten by Cromwell, either in regard to the officers, or to Owen. The Doctor was most probably applied to, because the officers considered him better qualified than themselves for drawing up a petition. He would frame the petition to suit the sentiments of the persons who were to subscribe to it; it must not, therefore, be considered a proper index of his own views. At the same time, there can be little doubt that he agreed with them in the main. He must have dreaded the consequences of this step, both to Cromwell, and to the country. By this time he had become jealous of the Protector's ambition; and must have deprecated the return of former scenes of tyranny, or of civil commotion. Whatever were his reasons, his conduct did not advance his interest at court; for, from this time, he does not appear to have been much about Cromwell. At his inauguration into the office of Protector, we find Lockyer preaching, and Manton, a Presbyterian, praying. The leading Independents either did not choose, or were not chosen, to officiate at that mock coronation. Cromwell's death took place in the same year, and Owen declares that he had not seen him for a long time before. All these are evidences of declining favour; but the most conclusive proof soon followed. On the third of July, the Protector resigned the Chancellorship of Oxford; his son Richard was chosen successor on the eighteenth; who, in six weeks after, dismissed Owen

[q] Ludlow, ii. pp. 131—134.

from the office of Vice-chancellor, and appointed Dr. John Conant, a Presbyterian, and Rector of Exeter college, in his room.[r]

CHAP. VII.

State of the University during the civil wars, and when Owen was made Vice-chancellor—Extract from his first address to it—From his fifth address—Specimen of the state of insubordination which prevailed in it—Learned men in office during his Vice-chancellorship—Independents—Presbyterians—Episcopalians—Persons of note then educated—Writers, Philosophers, and Statesmen—Dignitaries of the Church—Dissenters—Royal Society then founded in Oxford—Clarendon's Testimony on the state of learning in it at the Restoration—Owen's management of the several parties—Conduct to the Students—Preaching—The University presents a volume of poetical addresses to Cromwell—Owen's address—Trick played by Kynaston at Oxford—Owen's conduct to two Quakers—His views of the Lord's Prayer misrepresented—Refuses to swear by kissing the book—Wood's account of his dress and manners—Extract from Evelyn—Owen addresses the new Chancellor, Richard Cromwell—Takes leave of the University.

We now return to take a view of the university of Oxford during this period, and of the conduct of Dr. Owen, as Vice-chancellor. This celebrated seat of learning had been in most deplorable circumstances during the civil wars. The colleges and halls had gone to ruin; five of them were perfectly deserted; some of them were converted into magazines, and the rest were in a most shattered state: while the chambers were filled with officers and soldiers, or let out to townsmen. There was little, or no education of youth; poverty, desolation, and plunder,—the sad effects of war, were to be seen in every corner; the bursaries were emptied of the public money, the plate melted down for the king's service, and the colleges involved in debts which they were not able to discharge.[a] Such was the wretched state of the university, when Oxford fell into the hands of the parliament in 1646. It was not till after a most resolute struggle of two years from its being subdued, that the heads of houses who had espoused the royal cause, allowed the Presbyterian clergy, appointed to fill their places,

[r] Neal, iv. p. 180. [a] Walker's Suff. of the Clergy, p. 124. Neal, iii. p. 429.

to obtain possession of them. It may easily be supposed, that during this violent contest, little attention would be paid by either party to the interests of the university, or the promotion of learning. When the Presbyterians did obtain the superiority, from the extreme confusion in which they found every thing, and the excited state of the public mind, a long time must have elapsed before they could bring matters even into a train of order and management. They were scarcely fixed in their chairs, when their conduct and sentiments became disagreeable to the ruling powers, and other changes were premeditated. Long before Dr. Reynolds and his brethren lost their places, they must have foreseen the storm which was approaching, and would naturally be discouraged from attempting for the good of the university, what they otherwise would have done.

Such was the unsettled state of Oxford, when Owen was appointed to fill the office of Vice-chancellor. The chairs were chiefly occupied by those who were secretly attached to royalty and Episcopacy, or by Presbyterians, whose aversion to Independents was not less inveterate; but who submitted from one motive or another, to the successive changes of that fluctuating period. A few Independents were put in at the expense of Presbyterian exclusions, which could not fail to excite the bitterest enmity. We may, therefore, give Owen full credit for accepting the honour with reluctance and anxiety. To perform the part of a faithful and skilful pilot in such a storm, to reduce such a chaos into order, to plunge into the midst of party dissatisfaction and cabal, to please those above, and to satisfy those below, required no ordinary courage, self-denial, and ability. His views and feelings were thus expressed, in his first address to the learned body.

'I am well aware, Gentlemen of the University, of the grief you must feel, that after so many venerable names, reverend persons, depositaries and preceptors of the arts and sciences, the fates of the university should have, at last, placed him as leader of the company who almost closes the rear. Neither, indeed, is this state of our affairs, of whatever kind it be, very agreeable to myself, since I am compelled by it, to regard my return, after a long absence, to my beloved mother, as a prelude to the duties of a la-

borious and difficult situation. But complaints are not remedies of any misfortune. Whatever their situation, groans become not grave and honourable men. It is the part of an undaunted mind boldly to bear up under a heavy burden. For, as the comic poet[b] says:—

> The life of man
> Is like a game at tables. If the cast
> Which is most necessary be not thrown,
> That which chance sends, you must correct by art.

The academic vessel too long, alas! tossed by storms, being almost entirely abandoned by all, whose more advanced age, longer experience, and well-earned literary titles, excited great and just expectations; I have been called upon by the partiality and too good opinion of him, whose commands we must not gainsay, and with whom the most earnest entreaties to be excused were urged in vain, and also by the consenting suffrage of this senate; and, therefore, although there is, perhaps, no one more unfit, I approach the helm. In what times, what manners, what diversities of opinion (dissensions and calumnies every where raging in consequence of party spirit), what bitter passions and provocations, what pride and malice, our academical authority has occurred, I both know and lament. Nor is it only the character of the age that distracts us, but another calamity to our literary establishment, which is daily becoming more conspicuous:—the contempt, namely, of the sacred authority of law, and of the reverence due to our ancestors, the watchful envy of malignants, the despised tears and sobs of our almost dying mother, the University (with the eternal loss of the class of gownsmen, and the no small hazard of the whole institution), the detestable audacity and licentiousness, manifestly Epicurean, beyond all the bounds of modesty and piety, in which, alas! too many of the students indulge. Am I, then, able, in this tottering state of all things, to apply a remedy to this complication of difficulties, in which so many, and so great heroes have, in the most favourable times, laboured in vain? I am not, Gentlemen, so self-sufficient. Were I to act the part of one, so impertinently disposed to flatter himself; nay, were the slightest thought of such a nature

[b] Terence, Adelph. iv. vi. 21.

to enter my mind, I should be quite displeased with myself. I live not so far from home, nor such a stranger to myself; I use not my eyes so much in the manner of witches, as not to know well, how scantily I am furnished with learning, prudence, authority, and wisdom. Antiquity hath celebrated Lucullus as a prodigy in nature, who, though unacquainted with even the duty of a common soldier, became without any difficulty an expert General; so that the man whom the city sent out inexperienced in fighting, him the army received a complete master of the art of war. Be of good courage, Gentlemen, I bring no prodigies; from the obscurity of a rural situation, from the din of arms, from journeys for the sake of the gospel into the most distant parts of this island, and also beyond sea, from the bustle of the court, I have retreated, unskilful in the government of a university; unskilful, also, I am come hither.

'What madness is this, then, you will say? Why have you undertaken an office, which you are unable to execute, far less to adorn? You have judged very ill for yourself, for the university, and for this venerable senate. Softly, my hearers, neither hope nor courage wholly fails one who is swayed by the judgment, the wishes, the commands, the entreaties of the highest characters. We are not ourselves the sources of worthy deeds of any kind. "He who ministereth seed to the sower," and who "from the mouths of infants hath ordained strength," is able graciously to supply all defects, whether caused from without, or felt within. Destitute, therefore, of any strength and boldness of my own, and of any adventitious aid, through influence with the university, so far as I know, or have deserved; it nevertheless remains to me, to commit myself wholly to Him, "who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not." He hath appointed an eternal fountain of supply in Christ, who furnisheth "seasonable help" to every pious endeavour, unless our "littleness of faith" stand in the way: thence must I wait, and pray for light, for strength, and for courage. Trusting, therefore, in his graciously promised presence, according to the state of the times, and the opportunity which, through Divine Providence, we have obtained; conscious integrity alone supplying the

place of arts, and of all embellishments; without either a depressed or servile spirit, I address myself to this undertaking.'[c]

No human powers, or influence, could, in a short time, subdue the formidable difficulties of such a situation. Bad habits of long standing were not to be soon or easily corrected; strong prejudices against learning prevailed among some of the persons in power; and a disposition to innovate, and to overturn, had got possession of the public mind. A combination of firmness and prudence, of perseverance and meekness, was peculiarly necessary in the existing state, both of the country and the university. An attempt was actually made to suppress the universities entirely, which, had it succeeded, must have been attended with the most ruinous consequences. Of this state of things, he gives, in a subsequent oration to the university, the following description, which at once exhibits the miserable anarchy of the period, his love of learning, and his indignant contempt of the fanatical desperadoes who had attempted to re-barbarize the country.

'For the first two years we were a mere rabble, and a subject of talk to the rabble. Our critical situation and our common interests were discussed in journals and newspapers, by the most ignorant and despicable. Nor was any creature so miserably stupid, as not to entertain fears or hopes, on account of our situation. Such was the will of the Sovereign disposer of events, that mortals might learn to value less whatever is mortal; nor was it perhaps right, that, while empires, and the highest ornaments of the whole world were withering, the university alone should carry an uninjured flower. Meanwhile, our cause, which ought to have been held sacred, but was now exposed to the greatest danger, very few ventured heartily to defend. Nay, such was the pitch of madness, that to have stood up for gownsmen, would have been reckoned a violation of religion and piety. On the other hand, every thing that is reprobated among respectable men, and that is really criminal, was most plentifully charged on you every day by the malicious. Those who were more favourably disposed towards us, were nevertheless so much occupied

[c] Oratio, i. Works, vol. xxi. pp. 577, 578.

with their own affairs, that, deaf to entreatics, and worn out with almost continual reproaches, all they could do was mere conversation, contriving delays, or uttering such pious sentiments as are usual concerning the dead. All our affairs, therefore, being in confusion, and in the most imminent danger, destitute of all human aid, no wonder was achieved for us by the use of means, but our most merciful Father looked down on us from heaven. After it had become but too manifest, to what an extreme, the audacity, rage, and ignorance of some, from whom better things might have been expected, would have gone; the Governor of all things, so quickly defeated all their councils, and all their attempts, that with difficulty were those able to provide for their own interests, who, three days before, were most eagerly intent on swallowing up ours. Of that base attempt against the universities, which, with the anger and opposition of God, some insane creatures in vain engaged in, nothing remains, except the signal disgrace, and the never to be forgotten insanity. As long, however, as there shall be men, who, with copious eloquence shall be able to transmit, in eternal records, the deeds and decrees of the brave and wise, together with the infamy of the wicked, its authors will probably have reason to repent of that attempt.'[d]

The exertions of the Vice-Chancellor, we may be assured, were not wanting to correct these evils, to maintain the rights of the University, and to support its claims to the character of piety and learning. He set himself vigorously to curb the licentiousness of the students. The state of morals and order among them, with the degree of firmness and authority, which was requisite to keep them in subjection, may be judged of by the following incident. At a public Act, when a student of Trinity College was *Terræ filius*, the Doctor, before he began, told him, that he should have liberty to say what he pleased, provided he would abstain from profaneness, obscenity, and personalities. The *Terræ filius* began, but soon transgressed all the rules which had been prescribed to him. The Doctor several times desired him to forbear, but still he went on; till at last seeing him obstinate, he sent the Beadles to pull him

[d] Oratio, v. Works, vol. xxi. pp. 610, 611.

down. On this the scholars interposed and would not suffer them to come near him. The Doctor determined to pull him down himself, and though his friends near him dissuaded him, lest the scholars should do him some mischief, 'I will not see authority trampled on in this manner,' said he, and actually pulled him down, and sent him to Bocardo, the prison belonging to the University; the scholars standing off, surprised at his resolution.[e] He took care, says the writer of his life, to restrain the loose, to encourage the sober and pious, to prefer men of learning and industry, and, under his administration, it was visible that the whole body of the University was reduced into good order, and flourished with a number of excellent scholars, and persons of distinguished piety.[f] This will appear by a slight notice of some of the leading men among the Independents, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians then in the University.

John Owen, himself, was at the head of it as Vice-Chancellor, for five years, and filled the next important office in it for nine. Dr. Thos. Goodwin, whom Wood denominates 'One of the Atlasses and Patriarchs of Independency,'[g] was President of Magdalen College during the same period. As a theologian he was perhaps rather too high a Calvinist; but he was distinguished for his piety, learning, and industry, as the five folio volumes of his posthumous works bear ample testimony. Thankful Owen was President of St. John's College, who, according to Wood, had a good command of the Latin tongue,[h] and is described by Calamy as a man of polite learning, and excellent temper, and who was admired for his uncommon fluency, easiness, and sweetness, in all his compositions. Dr. Owen said of him at his death, which took place in 1681, 'that he had not left his fellow behind him, for learning, religion, and good humour.'[i] George Porter, Fellow of Magdalen College, was Proctor of the University in the second year of Owen's Vice-Chancellorship,—a man of good learning, great gravity, integrity, self-denial, and charity.[k] Stephen Charnock was Fellow of New College, and in 1652 Senior Proctor. His work on the Divine Attributes is a sufficient proof of his talents, piety, and

[e] Memoirs, xi. [f] Ibid. [g] Ath. Ox. vol. ii. p. 556.
[h] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 734. [i] Non-con. Mem. vol. i. p. 235. [k] Ibid. vol. i. p. 217.

learning.[l] Samuel Lee, of Magdalen Hall, afterwards Fellow of Wadham College, and Proctor in 1656, was the author of several learned and curious works.[m] He became a member of Dr. Owen's Church in London, to which he thus dedicates his 'Ecclesia Gemens,' in 1677: 'To the Holy Church of Christ, lately walking in communion with Mr. Joseph Caryl, and now with Dr. John Owen, before whom these exercises were handled, and to whom they are now humbly presented, by theirs in the fellowship of the gospel, S. L.' Ralph Button was Fellow of Merton College, and Canon of Christ Church, an excellent scholar, says Baxter; but of greater excellence, as a most humble, worthy, godly man.[n] He obtained his Fellowship of Merton College, in 1633, entirely by his merit, which led Dr. Prideaux, then Rector of Exeter College, to say, 'that all who were elected beside him were not worth a *Button*.'[o] Jonathan Goddard, M. D. was Warden of Merton College, a man of considerable celebrity as a Chemist and Physician. He was a member of the Royal Society, Professor of Physic in Gresham College, and the author of various Medical works.[p] Theophilus Gale, was Fellow of Magdalen College. Wood describes him as 'a person of great reading, an exact Philologist and Philosopher; a learned and industrious person;'[q] of which his 'Court of the Gentiles,' alone furnishes indubitable evidence. Thomas Cole, was Principal of St. Mary's Hall, and Tutor to John Locke and other celebrated individuals.[r] James Baron, was Divinity Reader of Magdalen College, and with Thankful Owen, Editor of Dr. Goodwin's Posthumous works.[s] Francis Howel, was Moral Philosophy reader to the University, and Principal of Jesus College.[t] Lewis Du Moulin, M. D. Cambden Professor of History, was a man of great learning and acuteness, and author of many works. 'He was,' says Wood, 'a fiery, violent, and hot-headed Independent.'[u] Mr. Francis Johnson, Master of University College, and one of Cromwell's Chaplains, was a man of learning and ability.[x] John Howe was a Fellow of Magdalen College, whose praise I need not pro-

[l] Non-con. Mem. vol. i. p. 210. [m] Ibid. p. 105. [n] Ibid. iii. p. 126, 127.
[o] South's Life, p. 10. [p] Ward's Lives, p. 270—273.
[q] Ath. Ox. vol. ii. p. 451. [r] Non-con. Mem. i. p. 249. [s] Ibid. p. 288.
[t] Ibid. p. 234. [u] Fasti, vol. ii. p. 753. [x] Non-con. Mem. vol. i. p. 257.

nounce, as he is universally admitted to have been one of the greatest men this country ever produced.[y] Henry Stubb, Second Keeper of the Bodleian Library, afterwards celebrated for his opposition to the Royal Society, was the most noted person of his age, according to Wood, who adds,—'While he continued under-graduate it was usual with him to discourse in the public Schools, very fluently in the Greek tongue. But since the King's restoration we have had no such matter, which shews *that education and discipline were more severe then than after, when scholars were given more to liberty and frivolous studies.*'[z]

Among the Presbyterians was Dr. Henry Wilkinson, Sen., Margaret Professor of Divinity, a man of learning and public spirit; 'A good scholar, a close student, and an excellent preacher,' says Wood.[a] Dr. Henry Wilkinson, Jun. was Principal of Magdalen Hall, and the author of several learned works. 'He was ever courteous in speech and carriage, communicative of his knowledge, generous and charitable to the poor, and always minded the common good more than his own interests.'[b] Dr. Dan. Greenwood was Principal of Brazen Nose College, and formerly Vice-Chancellor. Neal says he had the reputation of a profound scholar and divine; and even Wood acknowledges that he was a severe and good governor.[c] Dr. Edmund Staunton was President of Corpus Christi College. He was so well acquainted with the Scriptures, that he was a living Concordance to the Bible, and distinguished no less for his amiable manners than for the extent of his learning, and the greatness of his labours.[d] Dr. John Conant was Rector of Exeter College, of whom Prideaux, who loved a pun, as we have already seen, said, CONANTI *nihil difficile*.[e] Dr. Robert Harris, President of Trinity College, was a great Hebrew scholar, Chronologist, and Historian.[f] Dr. Henry Langley was Master of Pembroke College, and a solid and judicious Divine.[g] Dr. Michael Roberts, of whom Neal speaks, was a good scholar.[h] John Harmar was Regius Professor of Greek in the University. He was a most excel-

[y] Calamy's Life of Howe. [z] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 412.
[a] Non-con. Mem. vol. i. p. 241. [b] Ibid. vol. i. p. 242. [c] Neal, vol. iii. p. 468.
[d] Non-con. Mem. vol. i. p. 221—228. [e] Ibid. p. 229.
[f] Neal, vol. iii. p. 469. [g] Ibid. vol. iii. p. 470. [h] Ibid.

lent Philologist, a tolerable Latin Poet, and the author of several learned works. He was ejected at the Restoration.[i]

Among the Episcopalians, were Dr. Wilkins, Warden of Wadham College, who married the sister of the Protector, and was, after the Restoration, made Bishop of Chester; a man justly celebrated for the extent of his philosophical knowledge, his excellent temper, and admirable abilities:[k] Dr. Seth Ward, afterwards Bishop of Exeter and Salisbury, a timeserver, but the most noted Mathematician and Astronomer of his age:[l] Dr. John Wallis, who had been one of the clerks to the Westminster Assembly, Savilian Professor of Geometry, and highly celebrated as a Geometrician:[m] Dr. Pococke, Professor of Arabic, the greatest Oriental scholar of his time:[n] Dr. Zouch, Principal of St. Alban's Hall, a distinguished civilian:[o] Dr. Langbain, Provost of Queen's College, and keeper of the records of the University, an excellent linguist, philosopher, and divine; the friend of Selden and of Pococke. He died in 1657,[p] and was succeeded by Dr. Barlow, who had been tutor to Owen, and afterwards became Bishop of Lincoln: Dr. Paul Hood, Rector of Lincoln College, and Chancellor of the University in 1660:[q] Dr. Joshua Hoyle, Master of University College, and King's Professor of Divinity till his death, in 1654. He was a person of great reading and memory, and so devoted to his book that he was in a great measure a stranger to the world:[r] Dr. Thomas Hyde, afterwards Professor of Arabic, and author of the learned work 'De Religione Persarum;' and Mr. Samuel Clarke, another eminent Oriental scholar, and one of the most learned coadjutors of Walton in the Polyglot, then resided in Oxford; as did also the ingenious Robert Hooke, and the far celebrated Robert Boyle, who took up his residence in Oxford, as the only place in England in which he could enjoy the benefit of learned society, and prosecute to advantage his philosophical studies.[s]

Such were some of the celebrated men in the several

[i] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 347.—Non-con. Mem. vol. ii. p. 265.
[k] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 370. [l] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 627. [m] Neal, vol. iii. p. 472.
[n] Pococke's Life, prefixed to his works. [o] Wood's Athen. vol. ii. p. 166.
[p] Ibid. p. 140. [q] Neal, vol. iii. p. 459.
[r] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 113. [s] Birch's Life of Boyle, pp. 54—56.

parties who flourished at Oxford during the commonwealth. It may be doubted whether that university ever enjoyed a greater number of persons eminent in their respective professions, or more distinguished for character, talents, and learning. They afford indubitable evidence of the truth of Thurloe's account of Cromwell, 'that he sought out men for places, and not places for men;' a remark by no means generally applicable to the kings of the earth. The mere enumeration of their names is sufficient to shew the justness of the following eulogium which the Vice-Chancellor pronounced in 1653, on the worth and celebrity of his colleagues. After speaking of their piety and candour, he thus proceeds:—'I could not but give such a public testimony, as a regard to truth and duty required from me, to the very respectable and learned men, the heads of the Colleges, who have merited so highly of the Church, for their distinguished candour, great diligence, uncommon erudition, blameless politeness; many of whom are zealously studious of every kind of literature, and many, who by their conduct in the early period of their youth, give the most promising hopes of future merit: so that I would venture to affirm, that no impartial and unprejudiced judge will believe that our university hath either been surpassed, or is now surpassed by any society of men in the world, either in point of a proper respect and esteem for *piety*, for manners orderly and worthy of the Christian vocation; and for a due regard to doctrines, arts, languages, and all sciences that can be ornamental to wise and good men, appointed for the public good.'[s]

Nor will our opinion of the learning and celebrity of Oxford during this period be lowered, if we notice a few of the persons who then received a part or the whole of their academical education. Some of them were afterwards distinguished as philosophers and statesmen; many of them rose to eminent situations in the church, while others adorned the humbler ranks of the Non-conformist profession. Among the first class were:—John Locke: William Penn, the celebrated Quaker, and the enlightened founder and legislator of Pensylvania:[t] Dr. South, who enjoyed in early life the friendship and patronage of Dr.

[s] Pref. Dis. Jus. [t] Birch's Life of Tillotson, p. 124.

Owen, though he afterwards shewed himself unworthy of both:[u] Sir Thomas Millington, M. D. who was afterwards Sedlyan Professor of Natural History:[x] Dr. Ralph Bathurst, afterwards President of Trinity College, and nominated to be Bishop of Bristol:[y] Joseph Williamson, afterwards Secretary of State:[z] Sir Christopher Wren, the celebrated architect:[a] Dr. Daniel Whitby, well known for his critical acumen, and Anti-Calvinistic zeal:[b] Anthony A. Wood, the Oxford Antiquary, and the enemy of Puritans and Dissenters; to whose learned pages we have often been indebted:[c] Mr. Joseph Glanville, a distinguished writer, a Fellow of the Royal Society, and one of its most strenuous defenders:[d] Launcelot Addison, father to the celebrated Joseph Addison:[e] he was Dean of Lichfield, and a man of some eminence: Henry Oldenburg, a Saxon; afterwards Secretary to the Royal Society. He married the only daughter of John Dury, the indefatigable, but unsuccessful advocate of peace and concord among the Protestant Churches.[f] Learning, says Burnet, was then high at Oxford; chiefly the study of the Oriental tongues, which was much raised by the Polyglot Bible then set forth. They read the Fathers much there; and Mathematics and the New Philosophy were in great esteem.[g]

Many of the dignified clergy of the future reigns were also indebted to the Oxford Professors of this period for their education. Such as:—Dr. Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, and Historian of the Royal Society:[h] Henry Compton, successively a cornet in the guards, and Bishop of Oxford and London; a determined supporter of the Revolution:[i] Dr. Nathaniel Crew, Bishop of Oxford and Durham, and Grand Inquisitor of the Ecclesiastical Commission, in the reign of James II.; for which he obtained a pardon from William, through the intercession of Dr. Bates:[k] Dr. Thomas Cartwright, Bishop of Chester, and another friend of James II., with whom he afterwards fled to France:[l] Samuel Parker, son of a Puritan, and himself known as a

[u] South's Life. [x] Life of Anthony Wood, p. 85. [y] Biog. Dict.
[z] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 797. [a] Ibid. p. 772. [b] Ibid. p. 792. [c] Wood's Life.
[d] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 495. [e] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 780.
[f] Ib. vol. ii. p. 792.—Birch's Life of Boyle. [g] Hist. of his own Times, vol. i. p. 280.
[h] Biog. Dict. [i] Birch's Life of Tillotson, p. 185.
[k] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 786.—Birch's Life of Tillotson, pp. 137, 138.
[l] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 629.

grueller at Oxford, but afterwards a violent enemy of the Non-conformists, and of Dr. Owen in particular. He was made Bishop of Oxford by James II., and died more than suspected of Popery:[m] Ezekiel Hopkins, Bishop of Raphoe and Derry, a man of piety and abilities, whose Exposition of the Commandments, and other works, are still popular:[n] Thomas Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and afterward one of the Nonjurors:[o] Edward Fowler, Bishop of Gloucester, to which See he was raised for his active services at the Revolution. He was the author of several works:[p] Nicholas Stratford, Bishop of Chester:[q] Capel Wiseman, Bishop of Dromore, and Timothy Hall, Bishop of Oxford:[r] George Hooper, Bishop of St. Asaph, and of Bath and Wells, the writer of several learned works:[s] Narcissus Marsh, Archbishop of Cashel, an amiable and learned Prelate, and founder of a valuable library in Dublin, conducted on the most liberal principles:[t] Robert Huntington, Bishop of Kilmore, and distinguished for his attainments in Oriental literature:[u] Richard Cumberland, Bishop of Peterborough, well known as the author of a valuable work, 'De Legibus Naturae,' and one on Jewish Weights and Measures; and as the translator of Sanchoniathon, beside other productions:[x] Francis Turner, Bishop of Rochester and Ely, one of the seven who were sent to the Tower by King James; but who was afterwards deprived, for not taking the oaths to William:[y] John Lloyd, Bishop of St. David's.[z] He was a great critic in the Greek and Latin authors, but chiefly in the Scriptures; of the words and phrases of which he carried the most perfect concordance in his memory. Wilkins used to say, he had the most learning in ready cash of any one he ever knew. He was a great chronologist and historian, and a holy, humble, patient man, ever ready to do good when he had an opportunity.[a] After noticing some of the dignified clergy who were formed at Oxford and Cambridge during this period, Burnet adds: 'These have been the greatest divines we have had these forty years. They contributed more than can be well imagined to reform the way of preaching;

[m] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. pp. 616. 621. [n] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 647.
[o] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 617. [p] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 780. [q] Ibid. [r] Ibid. p. 793.
[s] Biog. Dict. [t] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 793. [u] Ibid.—Biog. Dict.
[x] Fasti, vol. ii. p. 796. [y] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 802.—Burnet's own Times, iv. p. 110.
[z] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 685. [a] Burnet's own Times, i. p. 273.

which, among the divines of England, before them, was overrun with pedantry, a great mixture of quotations from Fathers, and ancient writers, a long opening of a text, with the concordance of every word in it, and giving all the different expositions of it, with the grounds of them, concluding with some very short practical applications, according to the subject or the occasion.'[b]

Among the Dissenters who then received their education at Oxford, were:—Mr. Thos. Cawton, afterwards minister of a church in Westminster, of whom Granger says, 'he had few equals in learning, and no superior in piety:'[c] Mr. Edward Bagshaw, second master of Westminster School, while Busby was at its head; with whom, as well as with Baxter, he had some warm controversy. He may be said to have lost his life for refusing to take the oath of allegiance and supremacy, as he died from the effect of imprisonment on this account. He was the friend of Dr. Owen, who gives his character in the following epitaph; which is inscribed on his tomb-stone in Bunhill-fields:— 'Here lies interred the body of Mr. Edward Bagshaw, minister of the gospel, who received from God faith to embrace it, courage to defend it, and patience to suffer for it; when by the most despised, and by many persecuted. Esteeming the advantages of birth, education, and learning, all eminent in him, as things of worth, to be accounted loss for the knowledge of Christ. From the reproaches of pretended friends, and persecutions of professed adversaries he took sanctuary by the will of God in eternal rest, the 28th December, 1671:'[d] Mr. Philip Henry, well known as an eminent Non-conformist himself, and as the father of the more celebrated Matthew Henry, the Commentator. Of his exercises, Dr. Owen used to speak highly when Dean of the College of which Mr. Henry was a student. His account of the state of religion in the University, while he was at it, deserves to be quoted. 'He would often mention, with thankfulness to God, what great helps and advantages he had then in the University, not only for learning, but for religion and piety. Serious godliness was in reputation, and besides the public opportunities they had, there were many of the scholars that used to meet together

[b] Burnet's own Times, i. p. 278. [c] Biog. Hist. [d] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 491.

for prayer, and Christian conference, to the great confirming of one another's hearts in the fear and love of God, and the preparing of them for the service of the church in their generation.'[e] Mr. George Trosse, afterwards minister in Exeter, was a man of unwearied diligence, and considerable learning; he wrote several things, which were esteemed at the time, and left in six folio volumes a MS. Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism, which still exists. His account of religious exercises in Oxford, while he was a student, ought to be noticed along with Mr. Henry's, as throwing light on the state of the University at this period. 'He attended Dr. Conant's lectures on Fridays, Dr. Harris's catechetical lectures on Tuesdays, the lecture kept up by the Canons of Christ Church on Thursdays, Mr. Hickman's ministry, at St. Olaves, on the Lord's days, and heard also many excellent sermons at St. Mary's. He received the sacrament sometimes from Mr. Hickman, and sometimes from Dr. Langley, the Master of his College. He attended the repetition of Sermons, and solemn prayer in the College Hall, on the Lord's days before supper: and he himself repeated sermons and prayed, with a few young men in his chamber, afterwards.'[f] John Wesley, who was ejected from Whitechurch in Dorsetshire, grandfather of the celebrated founder of Methodism, to whom, while a student at Oxford, Dr. Owen shewed much kindness.[g] It is worthy of remark, that both by his father and his mother, John Wesley, High Churchman though he was, sprang from Dissenters: Dr. Annesley, his mother's father also, being a distinguished Nonconformist. Mr. John Quick, the well-known author of the 'Synodicon Gallia Reformata,' and of an unedited MS. in three folio volumes, now in the Red Cross Street Library, containing lives of eminent Protestant divines, both French and English.[h] Joseph Alleine, the ejected minister of Taunton; a learned and most devoted man, justly celebrated for his 'Call to the Unconverted;' which has gone through innumerable editions.[i] Thomas Tregrosse, the ejected minister of Millar and Mabe in Cornwall, and distinguished for his apostolic labours in that country.[j] John

[e] Memoirs of Philip Henry, by his Son, p. 19.
[f] Calamy's Continuation, vol. i. p. 385. [g] Non-con. Mem. vol. ii. p. 165. Ibid. vol. ii. p. 9. [h] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 299.—Non-con. Mem. vol. iii. p. 206.
[i] Clark's Lives.

Troughton, blind from the fourth year of his age; yet a good school divine, and metaphysician, and much commended for his disputations when at the University. He wrote on Justification, and several things on the Nonconformist controversy.[k] Charles Morton, afterwards a celebrated dissenting tutor at Newington Green; but so pestered with the Bishops' processes, that he was obliged to desist and retire to America, where he died.[l] Samuel Tapper, the friend of Bishops Wilkins and Ward; Thomas Danson, Samuel Blower, John Spilsbury, and James Ashurst, all Dissenting ministers of some eminence; beside many others too numerous to be named in this place.[m]

It was during this time, and in Oxford also, that the foundation of the Royal Society was laid; and some of its earliest and most distinguished friends either belonged to the University, or there received the elements of their education.[n] These facts and testimonies shew the flourishing state of learning, religion, and science, during the latter part at least of Owen's Vice-Chancellorship; and the merit which is due to him in bringing this important seat of instruction out of the dangers to which, at the beginning of his administration, it was evidently exposed from disorder, party spirit, and fanaticism. If any additional evidence is wanted in support of our representations, and to expose the calumnies propagated against Owen and his friends, it shall be furnished by Lord Clarendon, whose impartiality on such a subject will not be questioned. 'It yielded,' says his Lordship, 'a harvest of extraordinary, good, and sound knowledge, in all parts of learning: and many who were wickedly introduced, applied themselves to the study of learning, and the practice of virtue. So that when it pleased God to bring King Charles II. back to his throne, he found that University abounding in excellent learning, and little inferior to what it was before its desolation.'[o]

The Doctor managed the different parties in the University by his gentlemanly behaviour, and condescension; by his impartiality and decision; and by his generous disinterestedness. He was moderate, but firm, dignified, and at

[k] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 511.
[l] Non-con. Mem. vol. i. p. 347.
[m] Calamy's Life of Baxter, and Continuation—Non-con. Mem. passim.
[n] Thomson's History of the Royal Society, pp. 1, 2.
[o] History of the Rebellion, vol. iii. p. 57.

the same time full of gentleness. He gained the good wishes of the Episcopalians, by allowing a society of about three hundred of them, who used the Liturgy, to meet every Lord's day, over against his own door, without disturbance, although they were not legally tolerated. He secured the support and favour of the Presbyterians by giving away most of the vacant benefices in his gift to persons of that denomination; and with the Presbyterians of the University he held the most intimate intercourse.[p] Among the students he acted as a father. While he discountenanced and punished the vicious, he encouraged and rewarded the modest and the indigent. He was hospitable in his own house, generous to poor scholars, some of whom he took into his family, and others he assisted by presents of money.[q] Foreigners as well as natives experienced his bounty; for some of them by his favour and that of the Canons of Christ Church were admitted to free Commons, and the use of the Library.[r] He was frequently consulted by persons of distinction respecting their sons who were placed at the University, and entreated to take an interest in them.

In his own person he gave an example of fidelity and laborious diligence, which must have been attended with the best effects; while his labours in the pulpit aided the influence of his academical exertions. The University sermons on the Lord's day afternoons, used to be preached by the fellows of the College in their course; but this being found not so much for edification, the Vice-Chancellor and Dr. Goodwin divided the labour between them.[s] St. Mary's is a large place of worship, and when the Doctor preached in it, he was always attended by a numerous congregation. There was an Independent church at Oxford at this time, of which Goodwin was pastor, but I do not suppose that Owen held any office in it. Cawdry asserts that he laboured to gather a church in his own College;[t] and if he did, little doubt can be entertained of his success; but this is one of the rumours which that violent writer delighted to spread, and is therefore entitled to little attention. Every second Sabbath, however, he

[p] Memoirs, p. xi.
[q] Ibid. p. xii.
[r] Wood's Fasti, vol. ii. p. 788.
[s] Life of Philip Henry, p. 17.
[t] Independency further proved to be a schism, p. 30.

preached at Stadham, in the neighbourhood, where he bought some property. Thus, between the University and the pulpit, beside other labours, which remain to be brought forward, his hands must have been very fully occupied.

During Owen's Vice-Chancellorship, several incidents of a miscellaneous nature occurred, which serve to display his talents, illustrate his principles, or throw some light on the state of the times. These I shall now proceed to state.

On the occasion of the peace which Cromwell concluded with the Dutch, in 1654, many addresses and poetical panegyrics were presented to him. Among the rest the University of Oxford approached his highness with a volume of poems in all languages; entitled 'Musarum Oxoniensium ΕΛΑΙΟΦΟΡΙΑ,' &c. The dedication of this volume to Cromwell, by Dr. Owen, as Vice-Chancellor, is in prose, and full of expressions of gratitude to the Protector for his favour to the University. After which we have some verses by the Doctor, which, as they are the only specimen existing of his poetical talents, deserve to be inserted.

AD PROTECTOREM.

Pacifica Augusti quem non fecere poetam?
Sanctior, ingenium et musa mihi, Genius:
Concolor haud cygnis, vano nec percitus oestro,
Ex humili subitus vate poeta cano.
Quin magis ut placeam numero, numerisque refectus
Advolo: nempe omnis musa chelisque tua est.
Quod nisi conciliis Academia fulta fuisset
Caesaris, Auspiciis Gensque togata tuis;
Exciderat Augusti tibi, victoria noctem
Senserat, haud pacis gloria tanta foret.
Has Tibi pro musis gratis Academia mittit,
Qui pax una foris diceris, una domi:
Nomine utroque, tuas laudes haec pagina gestit
Tollere, qui pacis nomen et omen habes,
Accipias facilis, merito quos reddit honores,
Heroi invicto, Pacis Amica cohors.

Jo. Owen, Acad. Procan.[u]

[u] Of these lines I have been furnished with a poetical version in English by a friend.

TO THE PROTECTOR.

Now peace returns in conquering Cæsar's train,
Who, kindling, dares not the poetic strain?

After the Vice-Chancellor, many members of the University follow in order, with various degrees of poetical merit. Zouch Dr. of the Civil Law, Harmar the Greek Professor, and Dr. Ralph Bathurst, names well known in the republic of Letters, contribute to this collection, and join in eulogising Cromwell. Beside these, we find Busby, who so long ruled in Westminster School, and complied with every change of government in his time; and Locke, the friend of philosophy and liberty. Dr. South also celebrates the praises of the Protector; and yet could afterwards represent him as a lively copy of Jeroboam, and say of the leading ecclesiastics of the period,—'Latin was with them a mortal crime, and Greek, instead of being owned for the language of the Holy Ghost, was looked upon as the sin against it; so that, in a word, they had all the confusion of Babel among them, without the diversity of tongues.'[y] But this was Dr. South. The volume is closed with some verses from the printer, who styles himself Leonard Lichfield, Esq. Beadle of Divinity. He lived to perform the same honour to Charles II. as did many of the gentlemen above-mentioned. Praise generally follows fortune; and he who has the power of conferring benefits, will never want flatterers.

In September, 1654, a London merchant of the name

Ev'n I, devoted to severer themes,
Nor apt for song, or waking fancy's dreams,
Struck with no vain poetic rage, aspire;
And, lo, an humble teacher, grasps the lyre:
Pregnant, I haste the tuneful throng to join;
For every muse, and every lyre is thine.
Had these fair scenes, unshelter'd by thine arm,
To discord fall'n a prey, and rude alarm,
Not thou, Augustus, wert secure from shame,
Unlike thyself and heedless of thy fame;
Oblivious shades had vail'd thy victories,
And peace appear'd inglorious to our eyes.
But sav'd by thee, the Muses yet survive,
And grateful come to bid thy glories live;
Peace is their song,—restor'd at thy command,
To bless the British plains and every land;
For thee, they twine the wreath of peace, as due
To him who bears its name and emblem too.
Then gracious own, unconquer'd Prince, the lay
By which these friends of peace their homage pay.

This curious volume I examined in the British Museum, and extracted from it Owen's verses; but some account of it is furnished by Dr. Harris in the Life of Cromwell, pp. 369, 370.

[y] Ser. iii. p. 544.

of Kinaston came to Oxford, with a long beard, pretending to be a patriarch, and that he wanted a model of the last reformation. A number of the Royalists repaired to him, to obtain his blessing, among whom were Henry Langley, and Harmar, who presented a formal Greek harangue to him. It turned out, however, to be a trick of Lloyd, then a Tutor in Wadham College, and who afterward became successively Bishop of St. Asaph, Lichfield, and Coventry. It was chiefly intended against the Royalists; but as Dr. Owen and some of the Presbyterians had resorted to this Patriarch, or he to them, on account of his wished-for model, they were so offended on discovering the cheat, that Lloyd was obliged to abscond.[z]

This year, also, Oxford was visited by two female Quakers, who created some disturbance, and were rather severely treated. Gough, the Historian of the Friends, represents the Vice-Chancellor as needlessly interfering, and sentencing the poor women to be punished, when the Mayor refused. But on referring to Sewel, who is quoted by Gough, as his authority, and who, being a Quaker himself, would not have concealed Owen's misconduct, the story appears in a different light. After mentioning how the students had treated Elizabeth Heavens, and Elizabeth Fletcher, he notices that by two justices they had been committed to Bocardo, for speaking in the church after the minister had finished his discourse. A meeting of the Justices was afterwards summoned, which the Mayor refused to attend, and 'whither the Vice-Chancellor also was *required to come*.' Owen charged them with blaspheming the name of God, and abusing the Divine Spirit, to which the Quakers replied. After they were desired to withdraw, the Justices agreed that they should be whipped, which was executed accordingly next morning.[a] It appears from this account, that the Quakers were put in prison for disturbing the public worship, or speaking where they had no right to speak; that Dr. Owen in virtue of the civil office which he held in the University, was required to attend a meeting of the Justices, to consider their behaviour, and that he made some remarks on their religious sentiments

[z] Life of Anthony Wood, pp. 132—136.
[a] Sewel's History of the Quakers, pp. 90, 91.

and conduct: farther than this, Sewel charges him with nothing. The punishment was evidently very disproportioned to the offence, whoever was the party concerned in inflicting it.

During Owen's Vice-Chancellorship a calumnious report was raised, of his blaspheming the Lord's Prayer, and putting on his hat as a mark of disapprobation, when some preacher in Christ Church, concluded the service by repeating it. In consequence of this, Meric Casaubon wrote, in 1660, a formal vindication of the Lord's Prayer. As soon as the report reached the Doctor, he published a solemn denial of its truth, both in French and English. Notwithstanding this denial, the charge was repeated and aggravated by Vernon in his infamous libel;[a] which led Owen again to notice and repel it, in his letter to Sir Thomas Overbury.[b] After all this, Wood repeats the slander, and contradicts the Doctor's denial by reports.[c] So persevering are malice and detraction, and so useless is contradiction, when men are determined not to be convinced. That Dr. Owen did not believe the Lord's Prayer was intended to be a standing form of public devotion in the Church of Christ, and that he had made some free remarks on the improper repetition of it in the English Liturgy, and on the superstitious views which some persons entertained of it, he frankly acknowledges; but he as solemnly declares:—'I do, and ever did believe, that that prayer is part of the Canonical Scripture, which I would not willingly blaspheme. I do believe that it was composed by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and have vindicated it from being a collection of such petitions as were then in use among the Jews, as some learned men had, I think, unadvisedly asserted it to be. I do, and ever did believe it the most perfect form for prayer that ever was composed; and the words of it so disposed by the Divine wisdom of our blessed Saviour, that it comprehends the substance of all the matter of prayer to God. I do, and did always believe, that it ought to be continually meditated on, that we may learn from thence, both what we ought to pray for,

[a] Pp. 57, 58. [b] Works, vol. xxi. p. 563.
[c] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 557.

and in what manner; neither did I ever think a thought, or speak a word, unsuitable to these assertions.'[d]

In 1657, he was brought by Mr. Colt into Westminster Hall, as a witness against Mr. Dutton; and on being desired to take the oath, he requested the New Testament to be opened before him, and said that he would lift up his hand; but refused to submit to the ridiculous ceremony of kissing the book. The Jury requested the Court to inform them whether this mode of swearing could be admitted; on which Lord Chief Justice Glynn told them the Doctor's oath was perfectly sufficient.[e] This trifling anecdote shews how Owen viewed what some, perhaps, may consider but a small matter; but which enters deeply into the awful abuse and little influence of oaths, for which England is proverbial; and which constitutes a large portion of its national guilt.

The account which Anthony Wood gives of the conduct and manners of Owen, while Vice-Chancellor, is too curious to be omitted. 'He endeavoured,' says that illiberal writer, 'to put down habits, formalities and all ceremony, notwithstanding he before had taken an oath to observe the statutes and maintain the privileges of the University. While he did undergo the said office, he, instead of being a grave example to the University, scorned all formality, undervalued his office, by going in *quirpo*, like a young scholar, with powdered hair, snake-bone band-strings, or band-strings with very large tassels, lawn band, a large set of ribands pointed at his knees, and Spanish leather boots, with large lawn tops, and his hat mostly cocked.'[f] This most singular representation has the misfortune to be scarcely consistent with itself. To be an enemy to pomp, and yet a man of dress, to wish to put down form in others, and be at the same time very formal himself, are scarcely reconcileable. That Owen attached little importance to hoods and tippets, and other academical paraphernalia, in which Wood supposed a great part of the glory of an Ox-

[d] Works, vol. xxi. p. 570. In this tract 'On Liturgies,' there is a very admirable passage on the alleged authority for using the Lord's prayer in public worship. Works, vol. xix. pp. 409—412.

[e] Vernon, p. 22. Halliday's Life of Lord Mansfield, p. 172.

[f] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 556.

ford education consisted, is true; but that he did not interfere with the forms of the University, the following extract from Evelyn's Journal will shew.

'July 9, 1654, Dr. French preached at St. Mary's on Matt. xii. 42; advising the students to search after true wisdom, not to be found in the books of philosophers, but in the Scriptures alone. In the afternoon the famous Independent, Dr. Owen, *perstringing* Episcopacy. On Monday I went again to the schools to hear the several faculties, and in the afternoon tarried out the whole Act in St. Mary's, —the long speeches of the Proctors, the Vice-Chancellor, the several Professors,—*creation of Doctors by the cap, ring, kiss, &c.* these ancient ceremonies and institutions being as yet not wholly abolished. Dr. Kendal, now inceptor, among others, performing his Act incomparably well, concluded it with an excellent oration, abating his Presbyterian animosities. The Act was closed with a speech of the Vice-Chancellor.'[g]

On the subject of the University oath, we can let the Doctor himself speak:—'I can say, with some confidence, that the intention and design of the oath, were observed by me, with as much conscience and diligence, as by any who have since acted in the same capacity. And, being provoked by this man (Vernon), I do not fear to say, that considering the state of affairs at that time in the nation and the University, I do not believe there is any person of learning, ingenuity, or modesty, who had relation in these days to that place, but will grant at least, that notwithstanding some differences from them about things of very small importance, I was not altogether useless to the interest of learning, morality, peace, and the preservation of the place itself.'[h]

Wood's account of Owen's dress is vastly amusing. How much should we have been gratified, had he furnished us with a drawing of the Vice-Chancellor in his official costume; —his snake-bone band-strings, and lawn boot tops, would be invaluable antiquarian relics, could they be recovered.[i]

[g] Evelyn's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 276. [h] Works, vol. xxi. p. 569.

[i] This is not the first time that the Independents had been represented as men of gaiety and fashion. 'You shall find them the only gallants in the world,' says Bastwick, 'so that one who should meet them, would take them for roarers and ruffians, rather than saints. Yea, you shall find them with cuffs, and those great

Had Owen been a person of a different description, Anthony would have told us of his turnip head, and sepulchral face, and sackcloth garb, by which he disgraced the University, and brought all good breeding into contempt. Granger, however, very justly remarks, that Wood's description of Owen amounts in his style to no more than that he was a man of good person and behaviour, and liked to go well dressed.[k] 'We must be extremely cautious,' adds that acute writer, 'how we form our judgment of characters at this period; the difference of a few modes or ceremonies in religious worship has been the cause of infinite prejudice and misrepresentation. The practice of some of the splenetic writers of this period, reminds me of the painter, well known by the appellation of hellish Brueghell, who had so accustomed himself to painting of witches, imps, and devils, that he sometimes made but little difference betwixt his human and infernal figures.' Nothing could more accurately describe the manner of the Oxford historian. Granger, who was a Churchman, expresses himself very honourably of Owen. 'Supposing it to be necessary for one of his persuasion to be placed at the head of the University, none was so proper as this person; who governed it several years with much prudence and moderation, when faction and animosity seemed to be a part of every religion.'[l]

At the installation of Richard Cromwell into the office of Chancellor, Owen addressed him in name of the University, and eulogized in the strongest terms the character of his father. 'The University of Oxford casts at your feet those inferior sceptres, which your great parent was not ashamed to have borne in hands that now almost regulate the balance of power in all Europe, and which were no

ones, at their very heels, and with more silver and gold upon their clothes, and at their heels (for those upstarts must now have silver spurs), than many great and honourable personages have in their purses.' (Bastwick's utter routing of the Independent army: Pref. to the Read.) Who would think that the Independents were the grimfaced hypocrites of the Commonwealth? But for the counterpart of Owen, see Addison's description of an Independent Divine, supposed to be Dr. Goodwin, Spectator, No. 494. Among the other charges brought against them by Edwards, is, 'Their going in such fine fashionable apparel, and wearing long hair, as 'tis a shame; they feast, ride journies, and do servile business on the Fast days: and let a man but turn Sectary now-adaies, and within one half year, he is so metamorphosed in apparel, hair, &c. that a man hardly knows him.'—*Gangrena*, p. i. p. 62.

[k] Biog. Hist. iii. p. 301.

[l] Ibid. p. 302.

contemptible omens of his rising glory and honour. If the gownsmen shall seem to you, to act with a higher spirit than suits their condition, if they shall seem to be puffed up with a certain degree of pride, because they are unwilling to be under the care and protection of an inferior patron; that must be ascribed to the exceeding great favour of him, who, by his affection, compelled them to forget their lot, and to aspire to the noblest advantages of every description. But it is unnecessary, at present, to expatiate on his praise, or to rehearse his good deeds, since all are eager to ascribe to him the best blessings they enjoy; and he has himself obtained immortal honour by his conduct. I, therefore, purposely omit the eulogy, of the wisest and bravest man, which this age, fertile in heroes, has produced. Whatever may become of England, it shall ever be known, that he was a prince, who had at heart the glory of the island, and the honour of religion.'[m]

Part of his concluding address to the university, after Dr. Conant had been appointed his successor, enumerates some of the services which had been rendered to it during his administration, and will, therefore, form an appropriate conclusion to this section of his Memoirs. '..... persons have been matriculated; twenty-six admitted to the degree of Doctor; three hundred and thirty-seven to the degree of Master of Arts; six hundred and ninety-seven to that of Bachelor of Arts;[n]—Professors' salaries, lost for many years, have been recovered and paid; some offices of respectability have been maintained; the rights and privileges of the university have been defended against all the efforts of its enemies; the treasury is tenfold increased; many, of every rank, in the university have been promoted to various honours and benefices; new exercises have been introduced and established; old ones have been duly performed; reformation of manners has been diligently studied, in spite of the grumbling of certain profligate brawlers; labours have been numberless; besides submitting to the most enormous expense, often when brought to the brink of death on your account, I have hated these limbs and

[m] Oratio ad Richardum Crom. Works, vol. xxi. p. 616.

[n] The numbers are left blank in the Oration—I have supplied them as far as I can from Wood; but they may not be quite accurate.

this feeble body, which was ready to desert my mind; the reproaches of the vulgar have been disregarded, the envy of others has been overcome: in these circumstances, I wish you all prosperity, and bid you farewell. I congratulate myself on a successor, who can relieve me of this burden; and you on one, who is able completely to repair any injury, which your affairs may have suffered through our inattention. ..... But, as I know not, whither the thread of my discourse might lead me, I here cut it short. I seek again my old labours, my usual watchings, my interrupted studies; as for you, Gentlemen of the university, may you be happy, and fare you well![o]

CHAP. VIII.

Owen publishes his 'Divina Justitia'—His work 'On the Perseverance of the Saints'—John Goodwin—The doctrine of perseverance—Kendal—Lamb—Baxter write on this subject—Owen requested, by the Council of State, to answer Biddle's two Catechisms—Biddle—Progress of Socinianism—The 'Vindiciae Evangelicae'—Never answered—'On the Mortification of Sin'—Controversy with Hammond about Grotius—Death of Gataker—Selden—Usher.

It might be thought, that the Deanery of Christ Church, and the Vice-chancellorship of the university; preaching regularly on the Lord's day; attending many meetings in London, at the request of Government; and preaching frequently before Parliament; with various other public and important employments, would have so completely occupied Owen, that no time could have been found for writing books. Difficult as it is to conceive how he could, in such circumstances, find leisure for the latter occupation; it was during this period, some of his most valuable and elaborate works were produced. Of these, I shall now proceed to give some account.

The first which claims our attention, is a Latin Dissertation on Divine Justice,—'Diatriba de Divina Justitia, etc.; or the claims of Vindicatory Justice asserted, 12mo. pp. 296.—Ox. 1653.'[a] It originated, the Doctor tells us, in

[o] Works, vol. xxi. p. 615. [a] Ibid. vol. ix. p. 319.

one of the public disputations in the university, in which it fell to his lot to discourse on the vindicatory justice of God, and the necessity of its exercise on the supposition of the existence of sin. Though he had the Socinians chiefly in his eye, it was understood that some very respectable theologians in Oxford, entertained different sentiments from those which he then expressed. A good deal of discussion ensued, in consequence of which, he published this Diatriba. It is almost entirely of a scholastic nature, discovering, indeed, much acuteness, and a profound acquaintance with the subject; but not likely now to be read with much interest. It resolves itself entirely into a single proposition,—Whether God, considered as a moral Governor, could forgive sin without an atonement, or such a provision for the honour of his justice, as that which is made by the sacrifice of Christ. Owen, as we apprehend, scripturally and successfully, maintains the negative of this proposition. The affirmative had been held by Dr. Twisse of Newbury, Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, in a work, entitled 'Vindiciae Gratiae, Potestatis, ac Providentiae Divinae,' etc. published in reply to Arminius, in 1632; and by Samuel Rutherford of St. Andrews, in his 'Disputatio Scholastica de Divina Providentia,' published at Edinburgh in 1649. Both Twisse and Rutherford were learned and able men; but were, in this point, on the wrong side, and appear with some disadvantage as disputants with Owen. He had been a good deal molested by the reference to human authority on this subject, on which he very properly remarks—'That gigantic spectre, "It is every where spoken against," should have occasioned me no delay, had it not come forth, inscribed with the mighty names of Augustin, Calvin, Musculus, Twisse, and Vossius. And, although I could not but entertain, for all those persons, that reverence and honour to which they are entitled; yet, I easily got rid of that difficulty, partly by considering myself as having a right to "that liberty, with which Christ has made us free;" and partly by opposing to these the names of other very learned theologians,—as Paraeus, Piscator, Molinaeus, Lubbertus, Rivet, Cameron, Maccovius, Junius, professor at Samur, and others, who, after the virus of Socinianism had been spread, with great

accuracy and caution cleared up this truth.'[b] The subject is confessedly a difficult and abstruse one, in the present imperfect state of our faculties. 'For what we call darkness and obscurity in divine things,' says Owen, 'is nothing else than their celestial glory and splendour striking on our feeble eyes, the rays of which we are unable, in this life, which is but a vapour, to bear. Hence, God himself, who is light, and "in whom is no darkness at all," and "who clotheth himself with light as with a garment," in respect of us is said to have made "darkness his pavilion."'[c] Another passage of his preface I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting, both on account of its beauty and its truth. 'I confess there are many other subjects of our religion, on which we might dwell with greater pleasure and satisfaction of mind. Such, I mean, as afford freer and wider scope for ranging through the most delightful meads of the Holy Scriptures, and contemplating in them the transparent fountains of life, and rivers of consolation;—subjects, which, unencumbered by the thickets of scholastic terms and distinctions, unembarrassed by the impediments and sophisms of an enslaving philosophy, lead sweetly and pleasantly into pure, unmixed, and delightful fellowship with the Father, and with his Son.'

The work is dedicated 'To the most illustrious, and noble Oliver Cromwell, commander in chief of the army of the Parliament of the English Republic, and the most honourable Chancellor of the University of Oxford.' It went through the press, the printer tells the reader, while the 'author was absent in London, about the affairs of the university;' and which accounts for some errors in the printing of the book; a fault which is too chargeable on many of the works of Owen. A short answer to it was published, by Thomas Gilbert, then in Shropshire, a particular friend of Dr. Owen, and the author of his Epitaph.[d] The design of this Tract, is to shew the possibility of pardon without satisfaction; and that the death of Christ was not absolutely necessary, but of Divine free choice. Baxter says, that he also wrote an answer to that

[b] Works, vol. ix. p. 329. [c] Ibid. p. 326.

[d] Vindiciae Supremi Dei Domini (cum Deo) Initae: Sive Theses aliquot, et Thesium Instantiae oppositae nuper Doct. Audoeni Diatribae de Justitia Peccati Vindicatrice, etc. Lond. 1655, 8vo.

book, in a brief premonition to his Treatise against infidelity, to decide that controversy.[e] I believe the best decision will be found in the reasonings of the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. x. 1—14, which the reader may consult for his own satisfaction, with the assistance of Owen's Exposition. An English translation of the Diatriba, by Mr. Hamilton, was published in 1789, with a recommendatory preface by Drs. Stafford and Simpson, and Mr. Ryland, Sen. 'It will be granted,' they say, 'by all competent judges, that the author discovers an uncommon acquaintance with his subject; that he has clearly explained the nature of Divine justice, and demonstrated it to be, not merely an arbitrary thing depending upon the sovereign pleasure of the supreme Lawgiver, but essential to the Divine nature.' It is this translation which is published in the new edition of his works. It is, on the whole, well executed, but rather too literal.

The next work which the Doctor produced, is a more elaborate performance, in English. 'The doctrine of the Saints' Perseverance Explained and Confirmed: or, the certain permanency of their acceptation with God, and sanctification from God, manifested and proved; from the eternal principles, the effectual causes, and the external means thereof; in the immutability of the nature, decrees, covenant, and promises of God; the oblation and intercession of Jesus Christ; the promises, exhortations, and threatenings of the gospel: improved in its genuine tendency to obedience and consolation; and vindicated in a full answer to the discourse of Mr. John Goodwin against it, in his book entitled, "Redemption redeemed." With some digressions, concerning the immediate effects of the death of Christ; personal indwelling of the Spirit; union with Christ; the nature of gospel promises,' &c. Fol. pp. 444. Ox. 1654.[f] It deserves to be noticed, that he does not assume the title of D. D. on the first page; a proof of the truth of his reply to Cawdry already quoted; and that he counted it a higher honour, to be 'John Owen, a servant of Jesus Christ, in the work of the gospel,' than a Doctor of Divinity by human creation.

I have given the extended title of the work, because

[e] Baxter's own Life, part i. p. 116. [f] Works, vols. vi. vii.

it may serve as an analysis of its contents; which, were it practicable within reasonable limits, it would not answer the design of these Memoirs, to attempt. We have first a dedication to 'His Highness, Oliver, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland;' in which he expresses his confidence in Cromwell's Christian character, and his interest in the subject of the work. Then follows another, to the 'Heads of Colleges and Halls in the University;' in which he compliments them on their learning, orthodoxy, and steadfastness in the faith; and assures them, that 'no small portion of the work owed its rise to journies, and such like avocations from his ordinary course of studies; with some spare hours, for the most part, while absent from all books and assistance whatever.' We have then a Preface to the reader, of forty folio pages, in which he gives a sort of history of the doctrine defended; or of the reception it had formerly met with: and by the way, enters the lists with Dr. Hammond, on the Episcopal controversy, and the epistles of Ignatius. There is a great deal of learning in the Preface; but in so exceedingly rugged a state as to require no small exercise of patience to labour through it.

John Goodwin, whom he chiefly opposes, was one of the most extraordinary men of his age and profession. He was an Arminian, and a republican; a man of violence both in politics and religion:—whose opinions, talents, and contests, according to Owen, rendered him an object of no ordinary attention; and whose controversial powers were of the highest order. He had a great command of language, 'trimmed and adorned with all manner of signal improvements;' his expressions swell over all bounds and limits,—metaphors, similitudes, parables, all help on the current,—shallow and wide, but abundantly noisy and imposing——

> 'Monte decurrens velut amnis, imbres
> Quem super notas aluere ripas,
> Fervet, immensusque ruit profundo
> Pindarus ore.'—*Horace.*

One great object of his 'Redemption redeemed,' which is in fact an Arminian system of divinity, is to exhibit the doctrine of his adversaries, as a dismal, uncomfort-

able, fruitless, death-procuring system. Owen takes him up only on one point, and along with the examination of his arguments, brings into view every thing of importance which had been urged on the subject by men of the same sentiments, in former, or in latter times. The work contains a very accurate statement, and a most masterly defence, of the doctrine of perseverance. Every scriptural argument is judiciously brought forward, and no point or circumstance of importance, calculated to establish the doctrine, is omitted. Though there is a good deal of controversy, there is not much of the 'odium theologicum.' The doctrine is satisfactorily vindicated from its alleged tendency to induce carelessness or ungodliness; and is shewn to be eminently conducive to the comfort and purification of the people of God. It is rather surprising, when so many of the Doctor's Works have been abridged or republished, that this, till now, remained in the first edition, and is less known than its importance demands. It would be easy to abstract from it all the temporary argumentation with Goodwin, and to leave behind the valuable theological illustration of the doctrine.

The perseverance of the saints is the last of the five contested points between Calvinists and Arminians; but, like all the rest, the defence of it necessarily involves the discussion of the other four. If the salvation of a sinner be wholly matter of favour, it is not conceivable that this favour should commence its operations, and either fail in its ultimate design, or be rendered abortive by the untoward dispositions, or fickleness of the creature. This would imply, either deficiency in the plan of Sovereign mercy, or caprice in its administration. It forgets, that gracious influence is bestowed to correct the tendencies of human corruption, and to preserve from falling, as well as to secure eternal happiness. What is the doctrine of perseverance, but God's method of preserving and perfecting that which he had the exclusive honour to begin? If, indeed, salvation commences with man, is carried on by his own efforts, and completed by his resolution, the matter is entirely altered; but then nothing would be more contingent, or hopeless, than the salvation of any one individual. Whether such a

scheme has the support of Scripture, is fitted to promote the glory of God, or is adapted to the present state of human nature, may safely be left to the determination of every Christian reader.

The perseverance of the saints is a doctrine, which, rightly understood, has afforded much comfort to Christians, and is, in its very nature, fitted to produce this effect. The conviction that the unchangeable love, and the almighty power of God, are engaged for the preservation, and eternal happiness, of a fallen creature, must produce the strongest emotions of gratitude, and the highest feelings of moral obligation, in those who have scriptural evidence that they are the subjects of Divine mercy. That the doctrine has often been injudiciously stated, and not unfrequently abused, is an admission that will no more invalidate its truth, than that of any other doctrine of grace, to every one of which, the same remark will apply. Of the perverted application of the doctrine, a remarkable illustration is afforded in the reported conversation between Dr. Thomas Goodwin, and the Protector Cromwell on his death-bed. Of the truth of the anecdote, as it is told, I am far from being satisfied. That such a conversation took place, is very probable, and that Goodwin might use some expressions rather unsuitable, I do not question. But neither Cromwell, nor Goodwin, was so fanatical as to believe, that a state of salvation was compatible with living in sin, and dying impenitent. We may have been told the truth, but not the whole truth;—the omission of a few sentences may have concealed the explanation given by Goodwin of the sentiment, he is said to have uttered, and the cautions against self-deception, which he very probably addressed to the dying Protector. Awfully dangerous must be the condition of that man, whose past experience of Divine goodness encourages present delinquency; or whom the securities of the covenant of mercy lead to presumptuous transgression.

That Owen had no suspicion of such being the tendency of his views of this doctrine, is evident from the whole treatise, and especially from the awful description which he gives of the fearful apostacy of many who had made a pro-

fession of the truth. These are occurrences which are not peculiar to any age or place; though they may be more numerous, and apparent, at one time than at another. These are the stumbling-blocks, by which woe comes upon an ignorant world; and by which men are prejudiced against the doctrine of Christ. But still the foundation of God standeth sure. It would be highly criminal to explain away important truth, or to deprive the genuine Christian of a legitimate source of comfort, because the hypocrite may soothe himself to sleep by it, or the licentious profane it. It is the glory of the gospel that it provides mercy for the very chief of sinners; but if any man be encouraged by this to continue in sin, the same gospel pronounces his doom. The doctrine which Owen defends, encourages hope in God, but inculcates fear in respect of ourselves; it cherishes confidence, not by looking back on the past, but forward to the future; and justifies the expectation of final perseverance, only while men continue to persevere.

Owen was not the only opponent of Goodwin.—Dr. George Kendall attacked the Redemption redeemed, in another quarter, in his 'Vindication of the doctrine commonly received in the Reformed churches, concerning God's intentions of special grace and favour to his elect, in the death of Christ,' &c. fol. 1653. It has Owen's imprimatur, as Vice-chancellor, prefixed in Latin; in which he speaks very honourably of the author and his work. Another reply came from the pen of a zealous and popular Baptist minister, Mr. Thomas Lamb, 4to. 1656. Richard Baxter tried his middle course on this, as on other subjects. He published, in 1653, his 'Judgment about the perseverance of believers,' to which Kendall replied, in his 'Sanctis Sanciti.'—Dr. Kendall, he says, 'was a little quick-spirited man, of great ostentation, and a considerable orator and scholar; he thought to advance his reputation, by a triumph over John Goodwin and me.' Of this Baxter intended to deprive him; but for once, allowed his adversary to have the last word, by submitting to the arbitration of Archbishop Usher, who, he says, owned his judgment, but desired us to write against each other no more.[5] After two or three years' consideration, Goodwin returned a scoffing

[5] Baxter's own Life, part i. p. 110.

reply to so much of the Perseverance of the Saints, as was written, according to Owen, in a quarter of an hour.[h]

Before this work was published, Owen had another task imposed on him—to reply to John Biddle, the Unitarian. This singular person, the acknowledged father of the English Antitrinitarians, was born at Wotton-under-edge, in the county of Gloucester, and educated in Oxford, where he obtained the reputation of a good scholar. By the influence of leading men in the university, he was, in 1641, elected Master of a free school in the city of Gloucester; where he soon began to intimate his doubts respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. The communication of a small MS. containing twelve arguments against the Deity of the Holy Spirit, led to his imprisonment as the means of his conviction. After obtaining his liberty, he was brought before Parliament, and by its orders, detained in custody for five years. While in prison, however, he published 'A confession of Faith, concerning the Holy Trinity,' 1648. In consequence of this, his life was in imminent danger; for the Presbyterian party[i] in the Long Parliament procured an act to be passed, by which, the person denying in words or writing, the Being of God, the Deity of the Son or Holy Spirit, the distinction of the two natures in Christ, or his atonement, should, if the indictment were found, and the party not abjure the error, *suffer death*, without benefit of clergy. In other parts of this unmerciful statute, Baptists, Independents, Episcopalians, and Arminians, are subjected to inferior punishments: so that had it been enforced, all, except Presbyterians, would have been exposed to suffering in their persons, liberty, or property.[k] It was in reference to such measures, that Milton remarked indignantly, 'New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large.'

The friends of orthodoxy, however, had not allowed Biddle to write unanswered. He was taken up by Nicholas Estwick, in his 'Examination of Mr. Biddle's Confession of Faith;' by Matthew Poole, in his 'Plea for the Godhead of the Holy Ghost;' and by Francis Cheynel, in his 'Divine Trinunity of the Father, Son, and Holy

[h] Pref. to the Div. Origin of the Scriptures. [i] Neal, vol. iii. p. 497.
[k] Scobel's Acts. Crosby's Hist. of the Bap. i. pp. 199—205.

Ghost.' This was more to the purpose than imprisoning or hanging the unfortunate defender of heresy; who still went on publishing, and produced in 1654, 'a Twofold Catechism: the one simply called a Scripture Catechism, the other a brief Scripture Catechism for Children.' For this last publication, he was again brought before parliament, his books condemned to be burned, and himself committed once more to prison. Greater extremities would, probably, have followed, had not the Protector befriended Biddle, and finally sent him out of the way. This unfortunate man at last died in prison, after the restoration.[l] Biddle was a man of learning, and of a bold and independent mind; and by his sufferings, as much as by his writings, attracted attention to a creed, then little known in England; but the prevalence of which since, has almost blotted out in that country the existence of the party in which his sufferings commenced. So mysterious and unexpected are the revolutions and arrangements of Providence.

The progress of Socinianism in England, about this time, appears to have excited considerable alarm. Some of the foreign divines had interfered in the controversy, as Cloppenburg, Professor of Divinity in West Frisia, who published a Latin Vindication of the Deity of the Holy Spirit, against John Biddle, 4to. 1652. Nicholas Arnold, Professor of Theology at Franeker, animadverted on his Catechisms, in the Preface to his 'Religio Sociniana,' 1654. And Maresius, Chief Professor of Divinity at Groningen, very largely attacked them, in his 'Hydra Socinianismi,' published that same year; in the course of which, he deplores the sad state of England, on account of what he supposed to be the progress of this destructive sect. At home, the provincial Assembly of London issued particular instructions for the education and catechising of youth;[m] and the Council of State, conceiving that some more complete exposure of Socinianism was necessary, laid its commands on Dr. Owen to undertake this important task.

The Doctor lost no time in executing the work which he had been so honourably invited to write; for the very

[l] Biddle's Tracts and Life. Toulmin's Life of Biddle. Athen. Ox. ii. p. 197.
[m] Neal, vol. iv. pp. 135, 136.

next year he produced a quarto volume of seven hundred pages, full of profound erudition. 'Vindiciæ Evangelicæ: or, the Mystery of the Gospel Vindicated, and Socinianism examined; in the consideration and confutation of a Catechism, called a Scripture Catechism, written by John Biddle, M. A. &c. Oxford, 1655.'[n] It is dedicated to the Council of State, at whose request it was published; next we have a letter to 'his brethren the heads and governors of colleges and halls in Oxford;' and then follows a historical preface of seventy pages, addressed to all 'who labour in word and doctrine in Great Britain.' In this part of the work, he gives a learned and important narrative of the progress of Antitrinitarianism in the world; but particularly since the Reformation. It is replete with curious information respecting the characters and proceedings of the first founders of the party, and certainly does not place them in a very favourable light. How far all the sources from which Owen derived his information are to be depended upon, I have not the means of ascertaining. Some deduction ought always to be made from *ex parte* statements; but, I have no doubt, he was fully satisfied with the authenticity and correctness of the testimonies on which he depended. After the historical Preface, we have an examination of Mr. Biddle's Preface, which extends to forty-four pages more of preliminary discussion, and concludes thus:—'Having briefly washed the paint from the porch of Mr. Biddle's fabric; and shewn it to be a composition of rotten posts and dead men's bones, whose plaister being removed, their abomination lies naked to all; I shall enter the building itself, to consider what entertainment he has there provided for those, whom in the entrance, he doth so subtilely and earnestly invite to turn in, and partake of his provisions.'

In prosecuting this resolution, the Doctor does not confine himself to Biddle's Catechisms; he takes in with it the Racovian Catechism, the joint work of the Polish Socinians, Smalcius and Moscorovius; which is considered to contain the sentiments of the great body of the foreign Antitrinitarians. He notices, also, the Annotations of Grotius, as tinctured with the poison of Socinianism; and

[n] Works, vols. viii. and ix.

wherever his commentaries are at variance with the truth, or conceal it, the Doctor faithfully points it out, and endeavours to confute them.

The body of the work is divided into thirty-five chapters, in which he treats at great length, and with great minuteness and ability, every point of the Socinian controversy. Their sentiments respecting the Scriptures; the Divine nature and character; the original and present condition of man; the person, character, and undertaking of Christ; the doctrines of grace, election, and perfect obedience; the resurrection of the dead, and the future condition of the wicked, &c.—all undergo the fullest and most rigid scrutiny, and are proved to be very contrary to what is taught in Scripture, as well as subversive of the foundations of Christianity. It is among the most complete productions in this department of polemical theology; and, considering the circumstances in which it was composed, and the short time devoted to it, a memorable proof of the powerful intellect, and industrious habits of the celebrated author. It is the first work too, in English, in which the Socinian system is fully examined, and fairly overthrown, on Scriptural principles. And numerous and important as are the works on this controversy, which have been since published, I hesitate not to affirm, that as far as the argument from Scripture is concerned, there is scarcely any of them superior in importance or acumen to the Vindiciae Evangelicae of Owen. To the honour of the Evangelical Dissenters, it ought to be mentioned, that from the period of this publication to the present day, they have never wanted a man to defend with learning and ability the great truths of our common faith. From the Vindiciae of the Vice-chancellor of Oxford, to the publications of Fuller, and Wardlaw, and Smith, a series of works has appeared among them, which are not surpassed by the writers of any body of Christians, domestic or foreign, in ancient or in modern times.

One thing in the Vindiciae discovers the author's sagacity, and looks almost like a prediction. Referring to the fearless speculations in which many then indulged, and which were the natural results of the freedom, which the country had only begun to enjoy from ecclesiastical ty-

ranny,—he asks, 'Are not the doctrines of free-will, universal redemption, apostacy from grace, the mutability of God, the denial of the resurrection, with the foolish conceits of many about God and Christ, ready to gather to the head of Socinianism?'—'If ever Satan settle to a stated opposition to the gospel, I dare boldly say, it will be in Socinianism.'[o] It is a singular fact, that the career of many has been substantially what the Doctor here describes; from Calvinism to Arminianism, Arianism, and finally Socinianism. Biddle himself is an example of this course.

In conducting this controversy, I will not say, that Owen always maintains that unruffled calmness, and placid good-nature, which distinguish many other of his publications. At times, he shews in the selection of his epithets, and the structure of his sentences, that he was a man of like passions with others. There is nothing, however, of scurrility or personal abuse. He was too much a Christian and a gentleman, to indulge in the temper of malevolence, or in the language of reviling. Where important truth is concerned, he reproves sharply; and where he discovers a snake in the grass, he makes no scruple to drag it out, and to strangle it. He uses no ceremony with the greatest names, where the glory of his Master, and the souls of men are at stake. He was a stranger to that kind of courtesy which compliments men as Christians, whom an apostle would have considered enemies to the cross of Christ; but, at the same time, he discovers that the object of his hostility was their sentiments, not their persons; and that while he could shew no mercy to the former, he could pity and pray for the latter.

The following passage contains so much important instruction on the mode of conducting religious controversy, that the reader will, I have no doubt, be glad to meet with it. 'That direction, which with me is, *instar omnium*, is a diligent endeavour to have the power of the truth contended for, abiding on our hearts, that we may not contend for notions; but for what we have a practical acquaintance with in our own souls. When the heart is cast into the mould of the doctrine which the mind embraceth; when

[o] Pref.

the evidence and necessity of the truth abide in us; when not the sense of the words, but of the things is in our hearts; when we have communion with God in the doctrine we contend for, then shall we be garrisoned by the grace of God against all the assaults of men. Without this, all our contending is of no value to ourselves. What am I the better if I can dispute that Christ is God, but have no sense that he is a God in covenant with my soul? What will it avail me to evince by testimonies and arguments, that he hath made satisfaction for sin, if, through my unbelief, the wrath of God abides on me? Will it be any advantage to me in the issue, to profess and dispute that God works the conversion of a sinner, by the irresistible grace of his Spirit, if I was never acquainted experimentally with that opposition to the law of God, which is in my own soul by nature, and with the efficacy of the exceeding greatness of the power of God, in quickening, enlightening, and bringing forth the fruits of obedience? It is the power of the truth in the heart alone, that will make us cleave to it, indeed, in the hour of temptation.'[p]

These remarks are equally applicable to every religious discussion, as well as to the Socinian controversy; and, indeed, to the whole system of Christianity. He is not a Christian who is one outwardly; religion does not consist in a spirit, or even a capacity for disputing about it. We have no more Christian knowledge, than what influences the dispositions, and regulates the conduct—all the rest is but barren speculation, which inflates the mind, and is opposed to the love which buildeth up. It is possible to contend for truth in a spirit most opposite to its nature; and most warmly to advocate the rights of a cause, from which we ourselves may derive no benefit. In all cases, it should be remembered, that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

No answer, that I can find, was ever made to this work. Whether this arose from the circumstances of Biddle at the time, which certainly were not favourable to the defence of his sentiments, or from a conscious inability to meet the body of argument contained in the Vindiciae, I know not. But so it is—the first complete examination of Socinianism,

[p] Pref.

published in England, remains to this day unanswered, and I may add, will remain unanswerable.

The next thing which he published, is a short treatise 'On the Mortification of Sin in Believers,' 1656.[q] To this he was led, by observing the general behaviour of professors, the snares by which they were entangled, and the injudicious attempts of some to mortify sin without the influence of gospel principle.[r] Too much reason has always existed for this complaint. Selfishness, the love of ease and of pleasure, the fear of the world's frown, and the desire of its applause, have a poweful tendency to cherish that self-delusion, by which, it is to be feared, too many who profess Christianity, are finally destroyed. This treatise is the substance of some sermons on Romans viii. 13, which, at the desire of those who heard them, he had been induced to commit to the press. He was influenced, also, by another consideration. Having been engaged for some time in the discussion of various controversies, in some degree imposed upon him; he wished spontaneously to produce something of a different nature, and likely to be more generally useful. 'I hope,' he says, 'I may own in sincerity, that my heart's desire to God, and the chief object of my life, in the station in which the good Providence of God has placed me, are, that mortification, and universal holiness may be promoted in my own life, and in that of others, to the glory of God.' It is certainly one of the strongest proofs of the greatness of Owen's mind, and of the eminent degree of spirituality to which he had attained, that, amidst the multiplicity of his public labours, the cultivation of general knowledge, the noise of political, and the perplexities of theological warfare, in which he was deeply engaged, he found, I do not say time only, but capacity for thinking on such subjects as this. To maintain the life of godliness, and the ardour of devotional feeling, amidst the bustle of a court, or while surrounded by the cooling atmosphere of a college, are attainments of no ordinary kind. Yet, if we may judge of the state of his mind from the tract before us, he must have possessed the faculty of looking off from 'things seen and temporal;' when exposed to the full force of their influence, 'to things unseen and eternal.' It dis-

[q] Works, vol. vii. p. 325. [r] Preface.

covers a profound acquaintance with the corruption of the human heart, and the deceitful workings of the natural mind. Its principles are equally remote from the superficiality of general profession, and from ascetic austerity. It is not the mortification of a voluntary humility, or the infliction of self-devised and unnecessary pain, which it recommends; but the gradual weakening and final destruction of the principle of sin, by the operation of spiritual influence, and the application of Divine truth. In this process, the life of Christianity consists; and where it is not going on, neither the practice, nor the enjoyment of the gospel will be found.

About this time, also, he was involved in a controversy with Dr. Hammond, concerning the sentiments of Grotius, about the Deity and atonement of Christ. Grotius was one of the most elegant and distinguished writers of the seventeenth century. During a period which abounded with critics and commentators, civilians and theologians, he appeared in the first rank in all these classes; and his name still carries an influence and authority, which, comparatively, few others enjoy. He, undoubtedly, studied the sacred books with deep attention, and brought the vast extent of his critical and classical attainments to bear with happy effect on many obscure and difficult passages. In the elucidation of the Bible from the classic literature of Greece and Rome, he may be considered, almost, as the founder of a school on the Continent; from which have issued many learned and important, and not a few exceedingly pernicious works on the Scripture:—works, in which the sacred volume is considered merely as an ancient classic;—in which its inspiration, and all its peculiar doctrines are either denied, or merged in critical contention about its words and idioms; and all that is interesting to a sinner, or a believer, cooled down by a freezing mixture of Arianism, Socinianism, and Infidelity. The Scholia of Grotius on the Old Testament, were first published in 1644, and those on the New, in 1641, 1646, and 1650. The two last volumes were posthumous, as their author died in 1645. They excited, as might be expected, great attention in the learned world; but, both in these, and in some other of his writings, Grotius exposed himself to various animad-

versions. Suspicions had long been entertained that his views of the Divine character, and the atoning sacrifice of Christ, were not strictly orthodox; though these suspicions were excited, rather by his silence, or very guarded language on these subjects, than by what he had actually advanced. He had published in 1617, a Defence of the Catholic Faith, concerning the satisfaction of Christ, against Faustus Socinus; in which, while he opposed the Socinians, some friends to the atonement, were doubtful whether he had rendered any important service to the orthodox belief. Ravensperger, a theological professor at Groningen, soon after published his 'Judgment' of this '*Defensio Fidei*,' by Grotius; which occasioned Ger. Jo. Vossius to publish an answer, in defence of Grotius. Crellius replied to Grotius, on the part of the Socinians; who was answered, not by Grotius himself, who wrote a complimentary letter to Crellius, and took no farther trouble to put either his friends or his enemies right; but by Essenius, in his 'Triumphus Crucis;' who, while he defends the atonement, and repels Crellius, is extremely sparing of his praises to Grotius.[5]

In the Preface to his Work on the Perseverance of the Saints, Dr. Owen had made some observations on the epistles of Ignatius, in connexion with the Episcopal controversy, and also on the Socinian tendency of some of the annotations of Grotius. Hammond, the champion of Episcopacy at the time, took up both these subjects, in 'A Defence of Grotius, and an Answer to the Dissertations concerning the Epistles of Ignatius.' 1655. Owen, in his 'Vindiciae,' goes into the sentiments of Grotius more fully. Without alleging the evidence against that celebrated man from his epistle to Crellius, and his conversation on his death-bed, he examines all the passages of Scripture which treat of the deity and atonement of Christ; and as he goes along, notices how generally Grotius, in his commentaries, agrees with the Socinians: and that there is scarcely a passage in the Old or New Testament on these subjects, which he does not darken, explain away, or expressly contradict. Against these animadversions, Dr. Hammond published a second Defence of Grotius, in 1655; which

[5] Walchii Bib. Selecta, tom. i. p. 942.

produced, in 1656, a quarto pamphlet by Owen: 'A Review of the Annotations of Grotius, in reference to the doctrine of the Deity, and satisfaction of Christ; with a defence of the charge formerly laid against them.'[t] In this treatise, he re-affirms, and successfully establishes, what he had formerly asserted; and as Hammond had not met the charge against Grotius directly, he intimates, that he was likely to continue of the same sentiments, should he even see a 'Third Defence.' That, accordingly, soon appeared in 'A continuation of the Defence of Grotius, in an answer to the Review of his Annotations.' 1657. Here Hammond rests the defence of his hero, on his work 'De Satisfactione,' and on the denial, that his posthumous work on the epistles was properly his, as it contained sentiments contrary to his declared opinions in his life. Without pronouncing a positive opinion on the subject of dispute, it must be admitted, that Grotius afforded strong reasons for suspecting that he either did not believe, or that he considered the doctrines referred to, as of inferior importance. Dr. Hammond, the opponent of Owen on this occasion, was a man of talents, learning, and character. He was one of the warmest defenders of his church, and a most devoted servant of Charles, its royal head; to whose love of power and of popery, he had no serious objections. His New Testament shews him to have been a considerable critic, though influenced by strong systematic prejudices. His controversial writings discover more of learning than of judgment; and mark a greater deference to the authority of Fathers and Councils, than to that of Christ and his Apostles.

It would be improper to conclude this part of the life of Owen, without noticing the death of three eminent individuals with whom he had some connexion, and who possessed the greatest share of learning, perhaps, of any persons in England during that period. The first of these is the well known Puritan, Thomas Gataker, who died in 1654, in the 80th year of his age. This learned and laborious man was a member of the Westminster Assembly, but more celebrated for his critical writings, than for his connexion with that body. He was, undoubtedly, the most

[t] Works, vol. ix. p. 291.

enlightened biblical critic of his day in England. His treatise, 'On the Nature and Use of Lots,' 1619, established his character as a theologian; and his 'Dissertatio de Novi Instrumenti Stylo,' 1648; and his Cinnus, 1651, completed by his son in 1659, under the title of 'Adversaria Miscellanea Posthuma,' containing remarks on difficult passages of Scripture, and of other Greek and Latin writers, exhibit his profound aequaintance with the Bible, and with the principles of enlightened interpretation: while his admirable edition of the emperor Marcus Antoninus's Meditations, with a Latin translation, commentary, and introductory dissertation, 1652, exhibit his vast acquaintance with the ancient philosophy, as well as his entire command of Grecian literature. The celebrated Witsius published, in 1698, all his critical writings in one volume, folio, entitled, 'Opera Critica,' which will long remain a monument of his vast erudition, and accurate judgment. Owen and Gataker are introduced in a rather singular connexion, as the opponents of that knavish impostor, William Lilly, the astrologer. Strange as it may seem, this fellow was consulted by some of the greatest men of the age,—Lord Fairfax, King Charles I., Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, Sir Bulstrode Whitelocke, Cromwell, &c. The study of astrology was much cultivated in England about this time. John Booker, Dr. Dee, Dr. Forman, Sir Christopher Heydon, are all noted for their practice and defences of judicial astrology. The chief opponents of Lilly, according to his own account, were Gataker, with whom he had a lengthened controversy; Philip Nye, who also 'bleated forth his judgment publicly, against him and astrology; and Dean Owen of Christ Church who,' he says, 'had sharp invectives against me, in his sermons; I cried quittance with him, by urging Abbot Panormitam's judgment of astrology contrary to Owen's, and concluded, an Abbot was an ace above a Dean.'[u] These are only some of the many proofs, that the Puritans and Independents were not the visionary fanatics of the age.

In the same year with Gataker died Selden, the glory of England, as a patriot, a lawyer, and a writer.—No layman of the age possessed half the erudition of Selden, and

[u] Lilly's Life, by himself, passim.

few men have benefited their country so much by their pen as he did. His 'Uxor Hebraica,' his 'Libri de Successionibus,' 'De Diis Syris,' 'De Synedriis Veterum Hebraeorum,' &c. shew his vast acquaintance with Jewish and Oriental learning; while his works 'On Tythes,' on 'Titles of Honour,' and 'Mare Clausum,' or the right of Britain to the dominion of the circumjacent seas, afford no less powerful evidence, of his researches as an antiquary, and his attainments as a general scholar. Along with Owen, he was the staunch friend of the university of Oxford; and they appear to have combined their influence to save it from various dangers to which it was exposed.[x]

In the year 1656, died the learned and amiable Archbishop Usher—a lover of peace, of moderation, and of all good men. His chronological labours alone, are ample proof of his learning and industry; and some of his minor productions afford satisfactory evidence, that his critical attainments were far above mediocrity. He was the object of Cromwell's favour, who ordered him a public funeral; and the language of Owen in one of his works, shews, that there must have been a considerable intimacy between Usher and himself.[y] The death of such men must have been felt as a public calamity; their talents were exerted for their country's good, their learning adorned the age in which they lived, and their venerable piety graced the profession of the gospel.

[x] Walker's Suff. of the Clergy, part ii. p. 132.
[y] Dedicatory Epist. to the Div. Origin. of the Scriptures.

CHAP. IX.

The Independents propose to publish a Confession of their Faith—Their sentiments on this subject—Confessions published by them on various occasions—Cromwell consents to their meeting for this purpose—They assemble at the Savoy—Agree to a Declaration of their Faith and Order—Its sentiments on several subjects—Extracts from the Preface written by Owen—Baxter displeased at the meeting—Defence of it by Forbes—Chief objection to the Declaration—Not much known even among Independents—Death of Cromwell—State of Religion during his Government—His influence on Independency—Tillotson's account of a fast in the family of Richard Cromwell—Strictures on that account—Owen publishes his work on Communion—On Schism—Is answered by Hammond—by Firmin—by Cawdry—Owen's Review of Cawdry—Cawdry's rejoinder—Owen's defence of himself and Cotton—Publishes on the Divine Original of the Scriptures—His considerations on the Polyglot—Walton's Reply—His controversy with the Quakers—Richard Cromwell succeeds his Father—Owen preaches before his first Parliament—Charged with pulling down Richard—Defended from this charge—Assists in restoring the long Parliament—Preaches before it for the last time—The Independents entertain fears of their liberty from Monk—Send a deputation to him to Scotland—His conduct and character—Owen ejected from the Deanery of Christ Church—Remarks on his political conduct.

In the year 1658, the leading men among the Independent Churches projected a General Meeting for the purpose of publishing a united declaration of their faith and order. The part which Dr. Owen took in this meeting, the misunderstanding which prevails respecting the sentiments of Independents on the subject of Confessions of Faith, and the importance of the document published by the Savoy Assembly, for ascertaining their sentiments at this time, on various points, are sufficient reasons for giving a detailed account of this affair.

No one who requires a Confession of Faith in order to the enjoyment of Christian privileges can consistently object to a Church confessing the faith in its corporate capacity. If one Society may lawfully do this, no reasonable objection can exist why any number of Societies holding the same sentiments, may not exhibit their common belief. The public teaching and practice of a Church are constant declarations of its principles; and it surely cannot be

wrong to do that by the press, which is constantly done by word and conduct in the place of worship. Independents have never held the unlawfulness of publishing declarations or *expositions of their existing sentiments and practice;* and if this be all that is meant by Confessions of Faith, it is wrong to represent them as enemies to them. But these public formularies are generally viewed in a very different light. They are used as standards and tests by which the faith and orthodoxy of the present and future generations are to be tried; and to which a solemn subscription or oath is required, binding the subscriber to abide all his life in the principles thus professed.[a] This, when extending to a large book of human composition, when made a test of sentiment, a qualification for office, and an evidence of unity, is what Independents object to; as what the law of Christ does not enjoin, what has never promoted the peace, purity, or unity of the Church, and what has powerfully retarded the progress of truth.

The proper view of a Confession of Faith, and the distinction now noticed, are very accurately stated in the Preface to the Savoy Declaration. 'The most genuine and material use of such Confessions is, that under the same form of words they express the substance of the same common salvation or unity of their faith; and accordingly such a transaction is to be looked upon only as a means of expressing their common faith, and no way to be made use of as an imposition upon any; whatever is of force or constraint in matters of this nature, causes them to degenerate from the name and nature of *Confessions*, and turns them into *exactions and impositions of Faith.*'

With these views, Independents have almost from the commencement of their existence, as a body, published declarations of their belief. In 1596 was published, 'A true Confession of the Faith, and humble acknowledgement of the allegiance, which we, her Majesty's subjects, falsely called Brownists, do hold toward God, and yield to her Majesty and all other that are over us in the Lord.' In 1604, if not earlier, appeared an 'apology or defence of such true Christians, as are commonly, though erroneously, called Brownists,' &c. This work was published both in

[a] See Dunlop on the ends and uses of Creeds and Confessions; and the Confessional of Archdeacon Blackburn, for the *pro* and *con* of this subject.

Latin and English, and was addressed to the Continental and British Universities.[b] In 1611, 'The English people remaining at Amsterdam,' Baptist Independents, published a declaration of their Faith. In 1616, another Confession was published by the Independents, with a petition to King James for Toleration. In 1620, King James's 'Loyal subjects,' unjustly called Anabaptists, 'presented to him and to Parliament a Confession of their Faith.' A Confession of Faith of seven Baptist Churches in London was published in 1646; and another of several Congregations in the County of Somerset, in 1656. In all these documents the most explicit avowal is made of the doctrines of the Gospel, and of the leading points of Christian practice. Nor are they less explicit on the subject of obedience to Government, than of faith in God. So false have always been the charges of disloyalty brought against this body.

In the year 1648, the Congregational Churches in New England held a meeting at Cambridge, where they agreed to the doctrinal part of the Westminster Confession, and formed a platform of Church discipline suited to their own principles. Various reasons might be assigned why the British Congregational Churches had not sooner done the same. The profession had been long persecuted—most of the Churches owed their origin to peculiar circumstances, were far scattered from each other, and had not enjoyed the opportunity of meeting together for any common object. To these things they thus allude in the Preface to the Savoy Declaration: 'We confess that from the very first, all, or at least the generality of our Churches, have been in a manner like so many ships, though holding forth the same general colours, launched singly, and sailing apart and alone on the vast ocean of these tumultuous times, and exposed to every wind of doctrine, under no other conduct

[b] The designation of Independents is supposed to have been derived from the following sentence in this work. 'Coetum quemlibet particularem, esse totam, integram, et perfectam ecclesiam ex suis partibus constantem, immediate et *independenter* (quoad alias ecclesias) sub ipso Christo.' Cap. v. That the denomination *Independent* was not *assumed*, but *given*, is evident from the titles of many of the early defences of the body, and from their repeated protests against the misconstruction which this term occasioned. They claimed to be Independent of other churches merely in the exercise of discipline, in which sense all other churches profess to be Independent; as no church allows of the exercise of authority, or the right of interference, beyond its own body. The work from which I have quoted the above sentence is one of the many proofs that might be adduced, that the Brownists were neither destitute of learning, nor enemies to it.

than that of the word and spirit, and their particular elders and principal brethren; without Associations among themselves, or so much as holding out common lights to others, whereby to know where they were. But yet, while we thus confess to our shame this neglect, let all acknowledge that God has ordered it, for his greater glory, in that his singular care and power should have so watched over each of these, as that all should be found to have steered their course by the same chart, and to have been bound for one and the same port, and that upon the general search now made, the same holy and blessed truths, of all sorts, which are current and warrantable among the other Churches of Christ, in the world, should be found to be our lading.'

During the latter years of Cromwell's government, they appear to have felt the necessity, on account of their great increase, of publishing their united belief, of exhibiting their union in the faith and obedience of Christ, and of putting down the many calumnious misrepresentations which had been industriously disseminated to their disadvantage. For this purpose, they applied for liberty to meet, to the Protector, without whose sanction they durst not have assembled. Eachard represents Cromwell as granting permission with great reluctance. This was perhaps the case, though not for the reason which that Historian puts into his mouth—'that the request must be complied with, or they would involve the nation in blood again.'[c] Oliver knew well that they were not the persons who had involved the country in its calamities; but his security consisted in the division of religious parties rather than their union; and as he had discouraged Presbyterian Conventions, consistency required that he should not appear friendly to Independent Associations.

His consent being obtained, however, a preparatory meeting was called at London, by the following letter, addressed to the ministers in the city and its neighbourhood, by the Clerk of the Protector's Council.

SIR,

The Meeting of the Elders of the Congregational Churches in and about London, is appointed at Mr. (George)

[c] Neal, vol. iv. p. 188.

Griffiths (preacher in the Charter House) on Monday next, at two o'clock in the afternoon, where you are desired to be present.

Your's to love, and serve you in the Lord,

June 15, 1658. HENRY SCOBELL.[d]

This preliminary meeting accordingly took place, and by its direction circular letters were addressed by Mr. George Griffiths to all the Congregational Churches in England and Wales, inviting them to send Messengers to constitute a general meeting to be held at the Savoy, on the 29th September following.[e] From a number of the letters in answer to the circular, preserved in Peck's Desiderata, it appears that the Churches were generally favourable to the measure; but some of them very prudently expressed their fears lest any thing of a political nature should be concealed under the cover of this proposed Assembly, and lest it was designed to promote some coalition with the state. The event shewed that nothing of this nature was intended.

About two hundred Elders and Messengers, from above one hundred Churches, assembled at the Savoy on the day appointed, and continued together till the twelfth of the following month. They first observed a day of prayer and fasting, after which they considered whether they should adopt the Westminster Confession, or draw up an entirely original one of their own. They preferred the latter resolution, but agreed to keep as near the method of the other as possible. Mr. Griffiths was chosen Clerk, and Doctors Owen and Goodwin, Messrs. Nye, Bridge, Caryl, and Greenhill were appointed a Committee to prepare the heads of agreement, which were brought in every morning, discussed, and the statement to be adopted unanimously agreed to. The whole was afterwards published in 4to., under the title of 'A declaration of the Faith and Order, owned and practised in the Congregational Churches in

[d] Peck's Desiderata Curiosa, vol. ii. p. 501.

[e] The Savoy was a large old building in the Strand. It had been formerly a palace, and took its name from an Earl of Savoy, by whom it was founded. It had been the habitation of John of Gaunt, and of various persons of distinction. It was successively a convent, an hospital, and in the time of Oliver Cromwell was appropriated to the accommodation of some of the officers of the court, and other public purposes, among which was the meeting of the Independent Divines.

England; agreed upon and consented to by their Elders and Messengers in their meeting at the Savoy, October 12, 1658.' The Preface is long, and is said to have been written by Owen, though subscribed by the whole Committee. Next year it was translated into Latin by Professor Hornbeck, and annexed to his letters to Dury respecting Independency.[f]

The Savoy Declaration contains the same views of Christian doctrine, with the Westminster Confession; but omits those parts of it which relate to the power of Synods, Church censures, Marriage, and Divorce, and the authority of the civil magistrate in matters purely religious, *and which were never ratified by Parliament.*[g] Instead of these, it has a chapter at the end, on the Institution of Churches, and the order appointed in them; from which it may be proper to extract some passages, which convey the views of the Churches at that time, and from which it will appear, whether the Independents now hold the same leading principles.

On the constitution of churches instituted by Christ, it declares; '*To each of these churches*, he has given *all that power* and authority, which is *any way needful* for their carrying on that order in worship and discipline, which he has instituted for them to observe, with commands and rules for the due and right exerting, and executing of that power.' Sect. 4. 'Besides these particular churches, it maintains, there is *not instituted* by Christ, any church more extensive or catholic, entrusted with power for the administration of his ordinances, or the *execution of any authority* in his name.' Sect. 6 'The members of these churches,' it declares, 'are saints by effectual calling, visibly manifested by their profession and walking.' Sect. 8.

Of office-bearers it affirms,—'That the officers appointed by Christ are pastors, teachers, elders, and deacons.' Sect. 9. From the terms here employed, it might be supposed, that four distinct offices were held by the framers,

[f] Neal, vol. iv. pp. 189, 190.

[g] 'We rather give this notice,' say the Prefacers to the Savoy Declaration, 'because that copy of the Parliament's, followed by us, is in few men's hands; the other as it came from the Assembly, being approved of in Scotland, was printed and hastened into the world, before the Parliament had declared their resolutions about it; and yet hath been, and continueth to be, the copy ordinarily only sold, printed and reprinted for these eleven years.'

to be appointed for the church. But in the following sections, they speak of the office of pastor, elder, or teacher, only as distinct from that of deacon. Whatever distinction they might have contended for in the eldership, or Presbytery of a congregation, in the exercise of gifts; they appear to have viewed the persons composing it as occupying the same office. While the Declaration speaks of laying on of hands, along with fasting and prayer, as the usual mode of appointment to the pastoral office; it also declares, 'That those who are chosen by the church, though not set apart by the imposition of hands, are rightly constituted Ministers of Christ.' Sect. 12. And that 'no ordination of others, by those who formerly have been ordained, by virtue of the power they have received by their ordination, doth constitute them church-officers, without a previous consent of a church.' Sect. 15. In the administration of the church, it declares—'That no person ought to be added to the church, but by its own consent; that so love, without dissimulation, may be preserved among all the members.' Sect. 17.

On the subject of church censures, and combinations of churches by their messengers, its language is worthy of attention. 'The power of censures being seated by Christ in a particular church, is to be exercised only towards particular members of each church respectively as such; and there *is no power given by him to any Synods or ecclesiastical assemblies* to excommunicate, or by their public edicts to threaten excommunication, or other church censures, against churches, magistrates, or their people, upon any account, no man being obnoxious to that censure, but upon his personal miscarriage, as a member of a particular church.' Sect. 22. But, 'In cases of difficulties or differences, either in point of doctrine or administrations, wherein either the churches, in general, are concerned, or any one church, in its peace, union, and edification; or any member or members of any church are injured, by any proceeding in censures not agreeable to truth and order; it is according to the mind of Christ, that many churches, holding communion together, do, by their messengers, meet in Synod or council, to consider *and give their advice* about that matter, to be reported to all the churches concerned: howbeit, these Synods so assembled, *are not entrusted with*

any church power, properly so called, or with any *jurisdiction over the churches themselves, to exercise any censures, either over any churches, or persons, or to impose their determination on the churches or officers.*'—' Besides these occasional Synods or Councils, there are not instituted by Christ any *stated Synods in a fixed combination of churches, or their officers,* in less or greater assemblies; nor are there any Synods appointed by Christ in a way of *subordination to one another.*' Sect. 27.

This language is so very explicit, that it is scarcely possible to misunderstand it. If any be afraid of such meetings of messengers, they have only to consider, that they are merely for counsel and advice, and are invested with no authority or power over the churches. They are entirely of a voluntary nature, resulting not from systematic organization; but from the love, union, and agreement, existing among the churches. This is a very different thing from the authority claimed by the ecclesiastical assemblies, and the regular gradation of courts in the Presbyterian body. In the entire system of stated and organized subordination, the Savoy Declaration pronounces its disbelief.

Independents have always recognised the propriety of meeting, when any serious evil required to be investigated or removed; or any general object called for combined exertion. To meet without sufficient business, would only produce evil, and lead to improper interference. A greater degree of union, than prevails in some places, would, perhaps, be desirable; but if this can be obtained only by surrendering the rights of the churches, or by putting power into the hands of fallible men, no doubt can be entertained, that it is better to be without it. The union of love and cordial esteem, and that which is the mere result of system or authority, are very different things.

The preface to the Savoy Declaration, from which some extracts have been already made, contains various important statements. It avows that the Independents had always maintained, though at the expense of much opposition,—' The great principle that, among all Christian states and churches, there ought to be vouchsafed, a forbearance, and mutual indulgence to saints of all persuasions, that keep

to, and hold fast, the necessary foundations of faith and holiness.'—'This to have been our constant principle, we are not ashamed to confess to the whole Christian world.' They assert, 'That all professing Christians with their errors, that are purely spiritual, and intrench, and *overthrow not civil society*, are to be borne with, and permitted to enjoy all ordinances and privileges, according to their light, as fully as any of their brethren who pretend to the greatest orthodoxy.' And they solemnly declare, 'That if they had all the power, which any of their brethren of different opinions had desired to have over them, or others, they would freely grant this liberty to them all.' I apprehend this is the first work of the kind, in which these truly noble and Christian sentiments are announced. Happily it is no longer necessary to defend their justness, or to advocate their importance.

Referring to the prognostications of future evil, which men, who were no prophets, had presumed to utter, respecting the tendencies of Independent principles, the Prefacers say; 'Whereas from the beginning of the rearing of these churches, the words of the apostle have been applied to us, "That while we promised to others liberty, we, ourselves, would become servants of corruption, and be brought in bondage to all sorts of fancies and imaginations;" yet, the whole world may now see, after the experience of many years, that the gracious God hath, not only kept us in that common unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, which the whole community of saints have, but also in the same truths, both small and great, that are built thereupon, that any of the best reformed churches in their best, which were their first times, have arrived to.' The short time they were together, with the business they had to execute, without any previous concert, and the unanimity and harmony which pervaded all their proceedings; they consider an evidence of the presence and goodness of the Lord, and a proof that they had not their faith to seek when they assembled.

It would be foolish to expect that this meeting, or its proceedings, should escape animadversion. But it is rather strange, that so great a lover of peace as Richard Baxter, should have been its greatest enemy. His lan-

guage respecting its leading members, particularly Dr. Owen, and respecting some of the expressions in its declaration of Faith, is altogether unworthy of his piety and his understanding.[h] Instead of quoting his ill-natured reflections, which really carry their own confutation along with them, the reader will, perhaps, be better pleased with the testimony of the Rev. James Forbes of Gloucester, one of the members, which was called forth by Baxter's misrepresentations. Making every reasonable allowance for the influence of imagination and party feeling, this Gentleman's account impresses us strongly in favour of the piety and solemn procedure of this meeting.

'In general,' he says, 'I do, in the first place, declare, with all the solemn seriousness the case requires, that though I am now, through the goodness of God, turned of seventy; and in the days of my pilgrimage have had occasion to be present at several Synods, and meetings of ministers, and messengers of churches, there was the most eminent presence of the Lord, with those who were then assembled, that ever I knew since I had a being; the like I never saw before nor since, and I question whether I shall see the like on this side glory. It was a kind of heaven on earth I think to all who were present. Such rare elaborate speeches my ears never heard before, nor since. All along, there was a most sweet harmony of both hearts and judgments amongst them. Mr. Howe, then Chaplain to Richard the Protector, sat with them. We had some days of prayer and fasting, kept from morning till night; when one had prayed, I speak the truth and lie not, I have thought no one could outdo that person, and so in preaching, yet, ordinarily, they who succeeded, did excel those who went before.'[i]

If I were disposed to state any particular objection against the Savoy Declaration, it would be one, not more applicable to it, than to most of the productions of the same nature—its too great minuteness. There is too much of detail under the general heads, and too many explanations: as if it were not enough to believe the general doc-

[h] Sylvester's Baxter, part i. p. 101. Baxter's Catholic Communion Defended, part v. p. 8.

[i] Memoirs of Dr. Owen, pp. 21—22.

trine, but necessary, also, to receive all the reasons which are assigned for it, and every thing it is supposed to imply. This speciality has been the occasion of innumerable contentions; and the multiplication of explanations to prevent them, has only rendered them more fertile sources of division. The confessions of faith, recorded in Scripture, are all extremely brief, but very comprehensive; and the truths necessary to be believed by all Christians, are often summed up in a single sentence. Had all the compilers of Confessions studied this Scriptural brevity, instead of systematic extension, it would have been well for the peace and unity of the people of God.

A copy of this Confession fell into the hands of Peter du Moulin, a French Protestant clergyman of some eminence, which it appears he intended to translate, I suppose, into French. But having sent over to England some remarks on it, either addressed to Owen, or which fell into his hands; the Doctor wrote him a letter, which, I apprehend, put a stop to his future animadversions. From this letter it is evident he had either got a corrupted copy of the Savoy Declaration, or that he was disposed himself to corrupt it; as, in his remarks, it is charged with 'palpable contradiction, nonsense, enthusiasm, and false doctrine.' The letter has no date, but from its referring repeatedly to his work on Justification, it must have been written near the end of the Doctor's life.

The Declaration of Faith and Order, after it had been fully agreed to, was presented to the Protector, Richard Cromwell, by Dr. Goodwin, 'In the name and by the appointment of the Officers and Messengers of above an hundred Congregational Churches, from several parts of the nation.' On this occasion, Dr. Goodwin thus addressed his Highness, 'And now we present to your Highness what we have done, and commit to your trust the common faith once delivered to the saints. The Gospel, and the saving truths of it, being a national endowment bequeathed by Christ himself at his ascension, and committed to the trust of some in the nation's behalf; "committed to my trust," saith Paul, "in the name of the ministers;" and we look at the magistrates as *custos utriusque tabulae*, and so com-

mit it to your trust, as our chief magistrate, to countenance and propagate.'[k]

Part of this address I do not understand, and the rest of it I disapprove. What he means by the gospel being a national endowment, I know not; and as to the magistrate being the keeper of both tables of the Law, I can only say, it must be understood in a very qualified sense, otherwise it would convey an idea, not only dangerous in itself, but in opposition to the avowed belief of the framers of the Document presented.

The Savoy Declaration has never been much known, or generally used, even among Independents. As it was not intended to be a test or bond, and could not be enforced—it has never been regarded as an authority. The principles of the body are adverse to all such views, or uses, of any merely human production. Being substantially the same with the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, which are more easily to be met with, it seems gradually to have given place to them.[l] The reason may in part, also, be found, in the very moderate zeal of the Congregational body for the promotion of its distinctive principles. Whether this circumstance be to its credit or its disgrace, will be determined, just as men consider these principles of great, or little, or no importance. It is surely desirable, that the members of a Christian community should be able to give a reason of the faith and practice which they follow; and to the progress of that which he believes to be truth, no man ought to feel indifferent. Christianity teaches that the kingdom of God consisteth not in mere external order, or ordinances; but it also teaches, that in every thing which he observes in the worship of God, 'every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind.'

The preparatory measures for the meeting at the Savoy had taken place during the life of Oliver Cromwell; but the meeting itself was held after his death. This event occurred on the third of September; a day which the Protector had been accustomed to reckon fortunate, some of

[k] Catalogue of the places where Richard Cromwell was proclaimed, p. 25.

[l] Besides the first edition, printed in 1659, I have met with the following editions of the Savoy Declaration. An edition in 18mo. 1677; another in 1688; one in 8vo. 1729; one printed at Ipswich, in 8vo. 1745; and one in 8vo. published at Oswestry, in 1812.

his most celebrated victories having been achieved on it. It is to be hoped it was so, even in the end, notwithstanding the language and opinions of his enemies respecting him. Of this extraordinary man we have frequently spoken. It is not the object of this work to detail the deeds of his public, or the anecdotes of his private life; to eulogise his virtues, or extenuate his faults. The services which he rendered to his country, and to religion, are not unknown; and whatever may be thought of his motives, those services were neither few nor small. To the last, his private morals remained untainted; his public regard for religion, and for religious persons, was maintained; and he died with a prayer, becoming a Christian, and not unworthy of the Protector of England. Baxter's character of him, though he was never intimate with Cromwell, is on the whole, perhaps, just; but too long to be inserted here.[m] The opinion of Owen we have frequently quoted; an opinion formed from much personal intercourse with the Protector, both before and after he rose to that high situation; an opinion, uniformly favourable to Cromwell's character as a man, and as a Christian; and which, though it may have been moderated, was never retracted. That he retained it in its full extent to the end, I am not prepared to assert. While Cromwell appeared humble, disinterested, and sought his country's good, Owen gloried in him, and viewed him in the light of a saint and a deliverer. When his ambition got the better of his patriotism, and made him forget his former professions, Owen left him to defend himself, and their intercourse was interrupted. When, afterwards, accused of being one of those 'who promised Cromwell his life, on his last sickness,'[n] his reply was short, but satisfactory, 'I saw him not in his sickness, nor in some long time before.'[o] The reports of the fanatical prayers of Oliver's chaplains, are, perhaps, little better founded than this charge.

Of the true state of religion during the period of Cromwell's government, it is difficult to form an accurate estimate. Judging from certain external appearances, and comparing them with the times which followed, the opinion must be highly favourable. Religion was the lan-

[m] Baxt. Life, part i. pp. 98--101. [n] Letter to a Friend, p. 9. [o] Vol. xxi. p. 566.

guage, and the garb of the court; prayer and fasting were fashionable exercises; a profession was the road to preferment; not a play was acted in all England for many years, and from the prince to the peasant, and common soldier, the features of Puritanism were universally exhibited. Judging again from the wildness and extravagance of various opinions and practices, which then obtained; and from the fanatical slang, and hypocritical grimace, which were adopted by many, merely to answer a purpose—our opinion will necessarily be unfavourable. The truth, perhaps, lies between the extremes of unqualified censure, and undistinguishing approbation. Making all due allowance for the infirmity and sin which were combined with the profession of religion; making every abatement for the inducements, which then encouraged the use of a religious vocabulary; admitting that there was even a large portion of pure fanaticism, still, we apprehend, an immense mass of genuine religion will remain. There must have been a large quantity of sterling coin, when there was such a circulation of counterfeit. In the best of the men of that period, there was, doubtless, a tincture of unscriptural enthusiasm, and the use of a phraseology revolting to the taste of modern times; in many, there was perhaps nothing more; but to infer, that, therefore, all was base unnatural deceit, would be unjust and unwise. 'A reformation,' says Jortin, 'is seldom carried on, without a heat and vehemence which borders upon enthusiasm; as Cicero has observed, that there never was a great man, *sine afflatu divino*, so in times of religious contests there seldom was a man very zealous for liberty, civil and evangelical, and a declared active enemy to insolent tyranny, blind superstition, political godliness, bigotry, and pious frauds, who had not a fervency of zeal, which led him, on some occasions, beyond the bounds of sober temperate reason.'[p] The remarks of another profound reasoner, far removed from enthusiasm himself, are also deserving of attention. 'Many errors in judgment, and some delusions of Satan intermixed with the work, are not any argument that the work, in general, is not the work of the Spirit of God. However great a pouring out of the Spirit there may be, it is not to be ex-

[p] Jortin's Remarks on Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. p. 270.

pected that it should be given now, as it was to the apostles, infallibly to guide them in points of Christian doctrine. And if many delusions of Satan appear, at the same time that a great religious concern prevails, it is not an argument that the work, in general, is not the work of the Spirit of God, any more than it was an argument in Egypt, that there were no true miracles wrought there, because Jannes and Jambres wrought false miracles at the same time, by the hand of the devil. Yea, the same persons may be the subjects of much of the influences of the Spirit of God, and yet, in some things, be led away by the delusions of the devil; and this be no more of a paradox, than many other things that are true of real saints in the present state, where grace dwells with so much corruption, and the new man and the old man subsist together in the same person.—If some such as are thought to be wrought upon, fall away into gross errors, or scandalous practices, it is no argument that the work, in general, is not the work of the Spirit. Such things are always expected in a time of reformation. If we look into church history, we shall find no instance of great revival in religion, but what has been attended with many such things. Thus it was with the Gnostics in the apostles' time; and thus it was with the several sects of Anabaptists in the time of the reformation: so in England when vital religion did much prevail in the days of Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell, such things as these abounded.'[q]

The application of these judicious remarks is obvious. It is freely admitted, that no religion was necessary to make a man talk about 'seeking God;' or to lead him to hear many sermons, and even to make long prayers. All these things were done by many, whose conduct discovered that their pretensions were more than questionable. But when we find along with these, fervent zeal for the fruits of righteousness, the glory of God, and the spiritual and temporal well-being of men; active labours in preaching the gospel, or patient suffering on account of it, the aspect of religious profession becomes very different. It is impossible to doubt the sincerity of such persons. Yet such

[q] Marks of a work of the Spirit of God, by Jonathan Edwards, pp. 29, 31. The whole Tract is deserving of an attentive perusal.

were multitudes in the days of Cromwell, who are reckoned fanatical precisians, or designing knaves. These very persons became, in the days of the Second Charles and James, confessors and martyrs for the truth. The two thousand ejected ministers, and the ten thousands of the people who suffered the loss of goods and of liberty—of country, and even life itself, were for the most part, the generation of the Commonwealth. Their conduct, perseverance, and sufferings shew, that they were not the sickly dreamers, and visionary enthusiasts, they have been reckoned, but men of elevated and scriptural piety.

During the Commonwealth no system of church government can be considered, as having been properly, or fully established. The Presbyterian, if any, enjoyed this distinction. But the ministers who occupied the parish churches, were of very various sentiments. Many of them were secret friends to the old Episcopacy, and the liturgy. Many were for a reformed Episcopal government. Others thought no form of ecclesiastical polity of Divine right, or gave themselves no concern about the matter. Some were Independents, and a few were Baptists.[r] Cromwell's policy encouraged this diversity; as he dreaded the ascendency of any one party. If the ministers attended to their own duty, and did not interfere with his affairs, their sentiments respecting church government, did not prevent the enjoyment of his favour. Such a state of things may be considered anarchy and confusion by many, but it may be questioned, whether the great ends of the gospel ministry were ever more effectually accomplished in this country, than during that period. No sacrifice of conscience was demanded; no encroachments on religious liberty were practised; no bounds were prescribed to zealous exertion for the good of the souls of men. Every man sat under his vine, and his fig-tree, without fear. The word of the Lord had *free course*, and was glorified.

The influence of the life and death of Cromwell on the profession of Independency, which he is supposed peculiarly to have favoured, has, I apprehend, been greatly exaggerated. He has been represented as the chief instrument of promoting the increase and respectability of

[r] Baxter's Non-conformist's Plea for Peace, p. 130.

that party, and his death has been spoken of as the most disastrous event that could befall them. In as far as Independents enjoyed full liberty and protection, and were considered capable of serving their country, under the government of Cromwell, they were doubtless indebted to him; and it would be exceedingly ungrateful to deny, that these blessings they then enjoyed, in common with others, in a much greater degree than they have ever since done. For all this, let him receive the praise to which he is entitled. It does not appear that they were indebted to Cromwell for any thing more, and, in some respects, his patronage was hurtful, rather than useful to them. As a body, they had existed long before his name was known, and their increase and respectability arose from causes altogether independent of him. He might, indeed, be said to have raised himself, in a great measure, by their means. He took advantage of their reputation and influence, their love of liberty, and hostility to ecclesiastical domination, to shelter himself and to gain his own ends. He climbed on their shoulders to the summit of ambition, and then unceremoniously discarded or forgot them.

The enjoyment of his favour and patronage must, to a certain extent, have been injurious to the genuine profession of apostolical principles. It may appear strange, that an Independent should declare, that he has no wish that Independents, *as such*, should become the objects of political patronage. If, indeed, the glory of a Christian profession consists in mere numbers, in the enjoyment of wealth, or the possession of worldly honours, these views must be extremely foolish. But if its glory consists in the spiritual character of its members, be they few or many; then the honours of a temporal kingdom have no tendency to promote it. 'Pure and genuine Christianity,' says an ingenious member of the Church of England, 'never was, nor ever can be the national religion of any country upon earth. It is a gold too refined to be worked up with any human institution, without a large portion of alloy: for, no sooner is this small grain of mustard-seed watered with the fertile showers of civil emoluments, than it grows up into a large and spreading tree, under the shelter of whose branches the birds of prey and plunder will not fail to make

for themselves comfortable habitations, and thence deface its beauty and destroy its fruit.'[s] When any party of Christians becomes exclusively the object of state favour, it immediately operates as a bounty on that profession. Every man who wishes, or hopes to rise, has an inducement to enrol himself under its banners. There will be a visible increase of number and respectability, but a proportionate decrease of piety and purity. The Independents never were the objects of this exclusive patronage; but, in so far as that profession was considered, during the Commonwealth, to be more acceptable to the ruling powers than any other, it must have derived injury rather than benefit from the circumstance. It induced some of those volatile and unprincipled spirits, which always float in the current of state favour, to hoist the colours of Independency; but which they pulled down the first change of wind that occurred. Such adventurers, whatever be their rank, add no real strength to the effective force of a Christian community; and their dispersion is a blessing rather than a punishment.

In another point of view, also, the patronage of Cromwell and his party, has been injurious to the character of Independency. It has confounded it in the opinion of many with revolution and republicanism. It is the occasion, to this day, of representing its adherents as enemies to established, or at least to monarchical government. That there were Independents then who preferred a republic to a monarchy, especially an unlimited monarchy, I feel no concern to deny; as many of the greatest men of the age, though not Independents, did the same. But I feel concerned to maintain, that between the religious sentiments of Independents, and their views of any form of civil government, there is no link of connexion. And if the favour of Cromwell has led men to believe, that Independents are naturally, or necessarily, republicans, it has done them a material injury. In consequence of this mistake, every thing of a revolutionary and sanguinary nature during the above period, has, by some, been fearlessly charged on this body. To vindicate it, is now unnecessary. It has flourished, in the Scriptural sense of the

[s] Disquisitions on several subjects, by Soame Jenyns, p. 164.

word, more under a monarchy than ever it did under a Protector; and among the friends of the Hanoverian succession, and the steady, uniform, and conscientious supporters of that illustrious house, has always been reckoned the body of British Independents.

I must advert to one circumstance which occurred after the death of Cromwell, in which Owen is alleged to have been concerned.

'Tillotson told me,' says Bishop Burnet,[t] 'that a week after Cromwell's death, he, being by accident at Whitehall, and hearing that there was to be a fast that day in the household, out of curiosity, went into the presence chamber where it was held. On one side of a table, Richard, with the rest of Cromwell's family was placed, and six of the preachers were on the other side—Thomas Goodwin, Owen, Caryl, and Sterry, were of the number. There he heard a great deal of strange stuff, enough to disgust a man for ever of that enthusiastic boldness. God was, as it were, reproached with Cromwell's services, and challenged for taking him away so soon. Goodwin, who had pretended to assure them in a prayer, that he was not to die, which was but a very few minutes before he expired, had now the impudence to say, 'Thou hast deceived us, and we were deceived.' Sterry, praying for Richard, used those indecent words, 'Make him the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.' The same story is repeated on the authority of Burnet, in Birch's life of Tillotson.[u]

Without impeaching the veracity, either of Tillotson, or of Burnet, there are circumstances, which induce a strong suspicion of the accuracy of the anecdote. The gossiping disposition of Burnet led him to commit many mistakes, and writing down conversations about others long after they were held, was no great security for fidelity.[x] That

[t] Hist. of his own Time, vol. i. p. 116. [u] p. 17.

[x] 'The Bishop's hearsays,' says Lord Lansdowne, 'are, in most cases, very doubtful. His history is little else, but such a one told such a one, and such a one told me. This sort of testimony is allowed in no case; nor can the least certainty be built upon stories handed about from one to another, which must necessarily alter in the several repetitions by different persons.' Lord Lansdowne's Works, vol. ii. p. 179.—'I have never,' says Sir John Dalrymple, 'tried Burnet's facts by the test of dates and original papers, without finding them wrong.'—Memoirs of Great Britain, p. 34.

such a meeting took place is highly probable; but it looks somewhat suspicious, that Tillotson should, from mere curiosity, presume to go into the presence chamber of the Protector on such an occasion. Burnet does not seem to have adverted to the fact, that Goodwin's words, with which Tillotson was offended, are the very words of the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xx. 7.; and that they were used, in all probability, in the very sense in which the prophet employs them, not as affirming what God had done, but only what he had permitted men to do. 'Thou hast suffered us to deceive ourselves, and we have been deceived.' Nothing is put into the mouth of Owen; and I think it improbable that he was there. We know from himself, that he had not been with Cromwell on his death-bed, nor long before. He was none of the household chaplains, and this was a private household fast. He was not a favourite of Richard's; not likely, therefore, to be asked on such an occasion; and still less likely to be a volunteer. The entire story seems a compound of imperfect recollections, exaggerated in the repetition, with a view to expose the fanaticism of Cromwell's chaplains. The denial, on the part of Owen, of assertions, as positively made as the above, leads us to receive the testimony of the opposite party with great caution; and where the characters of others are involved, the testimony of bishops and archbishops ought to be subject to the same laws of evidence, which regulate that of other men.[y]

Besides the works already noticed, which Dr. Owen

[y] Those who amuse themselves with the prayers and fasting of the Protector, may contrast with the picture drawn by Tillotson, the following scene on the Lord's day evening in the court of his royal successor. It is described by Evelyn, a respectable and religious man, but no fanatic, as he was a devoted friend of the Church and of the royal family. 'I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God, it being Sunday, which this day se'nnight, I was witness of. The King sitting and toying with his concubines; Portsmouth, Cleaveland, and Mazarine, &c. A French boy singing love songs, in that glorious gallery, while about twenty of the great courtiers, and other dissolute persons, were at Basset round a large table, a bank of at least £2000, in gold, before them; upon which, the gentlemen who were with me made reflections with astonishment.'—Memoirs, vol. i. p. 585. This single scene speaks volumes on the dissoluteness and impiety of the court of Charles, and the awful effects which it must have produced on the country. Looking back but a few years, well might the people exclaim, *O tempora! O mores!* The Memoirs of Pepys, which have been lately published from his short-hand MS. by Lord Braybrook, contain many facts of a similar kind, and which shew the disgraceful state of the court, and the deplorable condition of public morals.

published during his Vice-chancellorship, he had been engaged in preparing another elaborate performance, which appeared soon after he had relinquished that office, 'Of communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, each person distinctly, in love, grace, and consolation, &c.' 4to. Oxford, 1657.[2] It appears, from a short preface, that he had preached on the subject, and then extended it into a considerable treatise. He first shews that the saints have communion with God in his manifestations of love and grace to them, and in their returns of holy gratitude, confidence, and joy. He then endeavours to establish from Scripture, that this fellowship is with each of the Divine persons distinctly, as the title of his work imports; and proceeds, at great length, to illustrate the nature of this fellowship with the Father in love, with the Son in grace, and with the Holy Spirit in consolation.

There is much delightful and important instruction in this work. Though the subject arises from the first principles of the economy of salvation, it embraces matter which is only adapted to the higher form of the Christian profession; and for the full understanding of it, requires the possession, and the vigorous exercise of that spiritual faculty which the natural man does not enjoy; and which constitutes the vital principle of the new creature. There is nothing in Christianity, indeed, corresponding with the mysteries of ancient paganism; there are no esoteric doctrines, which are concealed from the vulgar. But there are things, which those, who only stand in the outer court of the temple, do not know, and which are the peculiar privilege of those who occupy the penetralia. There is an initiation, which must take place, the work, not of man, but of God; without which, the visible apparatus of the gospel appears only like pantomimic exhibition, unintelligible and unimpressive. The eyes of a sinful creature cannot look at the invisible things of God, without undergoing an operation similar to unscaling the bodily organs of vision, when covered by a film which shuts out the light of heaven. In plain terms, the mind of man must undergo an entire moral revolution; a renewal, in order to its understanding, relishing, and improving the discoveries and felicities of the

[2] Works, vol. x. p. 1.

kingdom of God. The grand object of this dispensation, is not to restore the doctrines of natural religion, to exhibit a perfect code of moral legislation, or to establish the certainty of a future state. All these it embraces; and in these, the mass of men counted learned in Christendom rest;—but its sublime designs reach far beyond these narrow views. They comprehend the communication of a Divine nature to a sinful creature, and the gift of all things necessary for its support; till being completely delivered from the corruptions of this world, it receives an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord and Saviour. Sin destroyed and defaced the work of God. It is the design of the system of mediation to create a new world, consisting of one vast renewed family; at the head of which is placed, not an *earthly man*, frail and mutable, but the only begotten Son—'the Lord from heaven.' Man's rebellion occasioned disorder in the universe, and interrupted the intercourse between the Creator and the creature; by Christ, all things are again reconciled, and re-united; harmony is again restored, and God once more pronounces his work to be very good.

Only those who are divinely taught,[a] will enter into these views; and only such are likely to understand the work of Owen on Communion. For in what does fellowship with God consist, but in God's enjoyment of us, and our enjoyment of God, according to the established principles of the ministry of reconciliation? He that is destitute of this, knows nothing of the gospel, or its great design. He may discuss its evidences, speculate about its doctrines, and observe its institutions; but while he is without its immortalizing principle—he is only amusing himself with the leaves, instead of feeding on the fruits of the tree of life.

As an evidence how little understood these sentiments are, even by those who think themselves, almost, the only true Christians, I may quote the account which Wood gives of this work. 'In this book he doth strangely affect, ambiguous and uncouth words, canting, mystical, and unintelligible phrases, to obscure, sometimes, the plainest and most obvious truths: and at other times he endea-

[a] 1 Thess. iv. 9.

vours, by such a mist and cloud of senseless terms, to draw a kind of veil over the most erroneous doctrines.'[b] I do not know that there are half-a-dozen words in the whole book, which are not perfectly intelligible to every person who understands English. Nor is there any peculiarity of phraseology, except what distinguishes the author's style in all his writings. The darkness of which Anthony complains, is in the subject, or rather was in himself, in relation to that subject. It is not wonderful that a blind man does not understand a dissertation on the nature of colours, or that a deaf man imperfectly comprehends the doctrine of acoustics—the want of the faculty sufficiently explains the reason. It is in no degree more surprising, that a man who is a Christian, merely by hereditary descent, or nominal profession, does not understand the essential glory, or excellence of the gospel. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.'[c] The deficiency in the one case is physical, and in the other moral, which equally affect the perceptions of their subjects; but, which are materially different in the responsibility which they involve: as the one is a misfortune and the other a crime.

The greatest objection to the work on Communion is, that it is too rigidly systematic. Few, perhaps, will follow out the Doctor's views to the extent to which he carries them, of distinct fellowship, with the Father, Son, and Spirit. The groundwork of his illustrations is, indeed, in Scripture; but the same sort of superstructure does not seem to be reared on it. Too many nice distinctions injure the unity and divine harmony, which pervade the system of revealed grace; and ill correspond with that lovely freedom, and unfettered phraseology, which distinguish the inspired writings. To be indifferent to the importance of expressing ourselves correctly on all the doctrines of revelation, and to affect greater accuracy in treating them, than the apostles employ, are extremes equally improper and pernicious. If the latter was the fault of Owen, and the theological writers of that period, the former is the great evil of the present. It was then impossible to misapprehend the sentiments of the leading writers, on every

[b] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 560. [c] 1 Cor. ii. 14.

topic of importance connected with Christianity; in regard to many of our most popular theological writers now, it is extremely difficult to ascertain what is their belief on various subjects, and those not of trifling importance—yet, in this very circumstance they glory! Whether this arises from imperfection of knowledge, from undervaluing some parts of the Christian system, or from the fear of losing their popularity, by the manly avowal of obnoxious truths, or from all these combined together, I pretend not to determine; but it is deeply to be regretted: and when the writings of such persons have a powerful influence in directing the public mind, the evil alluded to is of serious magnitude.

The work on Communion is peculiarly interesting, considering the situation of the author while it was composed, and as a specimen of the discourses he was in the habit of delivering at Oxford. However much he must have been involved in the dry details of secular business, or profane learning, it shews how his mind was chiefly affected. No man could more boldly contend for the cause of liberty, or more warmly advocate the interests of learning; to despotism and Vandalism he was equally an enemy: but the salvation of Christ, and the spiritual interests of his people, were still the grand objects of his attachment and pursuit. His heart was in his Master's work, and alive to all the glory of his undertaking. No subordinate object was allowed to occupy that place in his mind, which spiritual things, alone, ought to enjoy; and in none, even of the extended controversies, in which he engaged, does he write so much *con amore*, as on communion with God. This invaluable privilege, must have been his solace amidst the distracting labours in which, contrary to his inclinations, he had become involved; and of the exercise itself, and the labour of writing about it, he could, probably, say what the amiable Bishop Horne does of his work on the Psalms: 'The employment detached him from the bustle and hurry of life, the din of politics, and the noise of folly; vanity and vexation flew away for a season, care and disquietude came not near his dwelling. He arose fresh as the morning to his task; the silence of the night invited him to pursue it; and he can truly say, that food and rest

were not preferred before it. Every part improved infinitely upon his acquaintance with it, and no one gave him uneasiness but the last; for then he grieved that his work was done.' At the distance of nearly twenty years, this work on Communion was very unmercifully assailed, and became the subject of a protracted controversy, which will afterwards be examined.

At this time the Independent churches were the subjects of much reproach and misrepresentation, particularly from the higher toned Presbyterians. It would appear that some of the Independent ministers thought Dr. Owen, and those of his brethren who occupied eminent situations, were not so forward as they should be to defend the common cause. Under this feeling, Mr. Beverly of Rowel addressed a very urgent letter to the Doctor, entreating him to advocate and defend the principles and interests of the churches. 'Truth itself,' he says, 'so far as we understand in this cause, now mainly calls and cries by these importunate lines upon you, for a more full vindication. And whom, should such a truth, in such an extremity, betake herself for relief to, among all her children, rather than yourself? or such as you can prevail with and judge, if you can justly any, more fit than yourself?—even yourself, who have such a name in the learned and Christian world already, as that your very appearing might be sufficient vindication? May I not charge you in Christ's name, to rise up once more for Christ, and for this part of his truth also, even as in a former church case? Esther iv. 14. What account can be given but that God, foreseeing how useful you might be in such a juncture, did choose to set you in that signal place at Oxford, even for so signal a service to such a signal portion of truth? And can you forbear to extend your hand in such a case? Who can despatch so noble a work, even *verso pollice*, with such ease and facility? What wonder if the memory of such a cause rot with posterity, when such as have tasted the glorious God therein, do themselves so slightly regard it, not improving the least of their many talents in vindication of it? Is this a time, when such reproach and gloominess cover the mountain of truth—is this a time for you, O ye heads of Colleges, the principal of the flocks, to dwell in your own ceiled houses,

and pompous stately possessions? when we poor under shrubs have our heads bowed down with grief, and after continued implorings of God for his stirring up some eminent instruments, are resolved rather to die than to desert the truth.—What, dear Sir, if we were all, as some such as yourself are, personally promoted? What satisfaction is this, when the cause of truth lies bleeding and rotting without care or vindication? How many empty compliments it is like you have time for, and not vacancy enough for such a work as would live after, yea, procure life to the cause after your death? I hope God the Father will at length hear the many cries and tears in secret poured forth in behalf of what I have thus written. If I lose my labour as to man, I shall *go softly* all my few remaining days in the bitterness of my soul; and at my last gasp, or departing sob, rejoice that I am going to the blessed souls of Shepherd, Hooker, and Cotton. Pardon, dear Sir, my errata in all this, for either matter or form; but as you love Christ Jesus, and dread that *anathema*, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. let it be duly improved.'[d]

This very solemn and urgent letter, dated Feb. 24, 1657, was not without effect on Owen. For in the course of that same year he produced a small work, relating to the subject on which Mr. Beverly had written him, and which occasioned immediately an angry and protracted controversy. This was, 'Of Schism, the true nature of it discovered and considered, with reference to the present differences in religion.' 12mo. pp. 280. Ox. 1657.[e] This subject, which somebody justly observes, has occasioned a schism about the meaning of the word, Owen endeavours to illustrate entirely by the light of revelation. Having noticed the primary import of the term—a rent or separation of parts in a united substance; and its moral or analogical meaning

[d] Maurice's Account of the Church at Rowel, pp. 11—14. The writer of this uncommon letter appears to have been a very excellent man, and much attached to the Congregational cause. He had been a tutor in the University of Cambridge, and engaged in the service of Christ in different parts of Scotland and England, I suppose with the army, before he came to Rowel, in 1655. Here he laboured with much zeal and disinterestedness, till the Lord put a period to his services on the first of June, 1658. He wrote several things—one in Reply to Wood of St. Andrews against Lockyer—another in Latin, in answer to Hornbeck, *De Independentismo*; and one on free admission, in reply to a person of the name of Simson. Maurice's Account, pp. 1—21. Brook's Lives of the Puritans, vol. iii. p. 298.

[e] Works, vol. xix. p. 109.

—a division of sentiment, or affection, in a religious or political body; he proceeds to shew, that the apostles use the term schism, merely to describe 'causeless differences and contentions among the members of a particular church, contrary to that love, prudence, and forbearance, which ought to be exercised towards one another.' In order that any one may be guilty of the sin of schism, he shews that 'he must be a member of some one church, constituted by Jesus Christ; and that in it he raises causeless differences with others, to the interruption of Christian love, and to the disturbance of the due performance of the duties required of the church in the worship of God.' Hence it follows, that the separation of one church, or of many churches, from other churches, is never described as schism in Scripture; especially if the body seceded from, is not in constitution of Divine appointment; and that the separation of an individual from a church, on account of what affects his conscience, is not the sin of schism. Hence, all the abusive language of Romanists against Protestants, and Episcopalians against Presbyterians, and of the latter against Independents, as schismatics, is utterly misplaced; as, whether any be guilty of this evil, depends not on the circumstance of separation; but on the merits of the case, and on other parts of conduct. Owen's view of the subject is nearly the same with Dr. Campbell's, in his valuable dissertation on this word, to which the reader is referred for farther satisfaction, as to its scriptural import and use.[f]

What a fruitful source of theological altercation would be dried up, were this interpretation of the term adhered to! But this would not answer the purpose of such as most delight in hurling the *brutum fulmen* against others. It is a fine way to make an adversary odious, to fix on him the character of a schismatic; though it may, perhaps, more justly belong to him whose unchristian conduct is, probably, one of the chief reasons that has occasioned the separation. 'Schism,' says the celebrated Hales of Eaton, 'has long been one of those theological scare-crows, with which they, who wish to uphold a party in religion, use to frighten such, as making any inquiry, are ready to relinquish or oppose it, if it appear either erroneous or suspi-

[f] Diss. ix. part iii.

cious.'[g] It is worthy of remark, that the hideous nature of it, is seldom urged, except to those who leave a community. Let as many schismatics, from other bodies, as please, come into a society; it is never hinted that they have been guilty of this crime: a strong proof, that the sin of schism is deplored, chiefly when it is an offence against men's interests, feelings, or authority. Such persons should think of the witty Vincent Alsop's remark:—'Schism is an ecclesiastical culverine, which being overcharged, and ill managed, recoils and hurts the canoneer. He that undertakes to play this great gun had need to be very careful, and spunge it well, lest it fire at home.'[h]

Owen's work, though it had little connexion with any party sentiments, as its principle was equally available by all parties of Protestants; all of them being in the ordinary sense of the term, schismatics in relation to others, soon met with several opponents. The first of these was Dr. Hammond, who subjoined to his continuation of the Defence of Grotius, 'A reply to some passages of the Reviewer in his late book of Schism.' This reply relates chiefly to the state of Episcopacy, in the times succeeding the apostles; and on this account, Owen took little notice of it.

Another answer was from the pen of Giles Firmin, who wrote 'Of Schism, Parochial Congregations, and Ordination by imposition of hands, wherein Dr. Owen's discovery of the true nature of Schism is briefly and friendly examined.' 8vo. pp. 157. 1658. The book corresponds with the title, and is written in a very Christian spirit. The object of it is to shew, that Schism may be a more extensive evil than Dr. Owen's definition admits.—He, therefore, defines it, 'The solution of that unity, which Christ requires in his church,' and which may extend to the whole visible profession of Christianity. This, of course, depends on the extension of the analogical meaning of the term. But there is, on the whole, no very material difference between Owen and Firmin. Alluding to him, the Doctor said, too severely, that Firmin neither understood him, nor the things which he wrote about.[i] Mr.

[g] Hales's Works, vol. i. p. 114. [h] Melius Inquirend. p. 209.
[i] Pref. to Div. Origin. of the Scriptures.

Firmin had been several years in New England; but, when he wrote this treatise, was pastor of the church at Shalford, in Essex. He was a very respectable man; an eminent scholar, especially in the Oriental languages; well read in the Fathers, Church history, and religious controversies.[k] If he was a Presbyterian, he was so moderate a one, as to be mistaken by Edwards, of Gangrene celebrity, for an Independent.

But the most violent adversary of the Doctor on this occasion, was Daniel Cawdry, 'Preacher of the word at Billingmagn, Northamptonshire'—a high-flying Presbyterian. He produced, in the same year in which the Doctor's work appeared, a pamphlet, the title of which, at once, begs the question, and forestalls the proof; 'Independency a great schism.' 12mo. pp. 200. Lond. 1657. The first sentence of this work corresponds with what we have said of the use made of the charge of Schism, and with the dogmatic title of the book. 'The crime of Schism is so heinous in itself, and so dangerous and noxious to the cause of God; that no invectives against the evils of it can well be too great or high.' So have all parties exclaimed, who arrogate to themselves the exclusive character of the true church, against those who have had the temerity to call in question their claims, and dissent from their fellowship.

When it is stated, that this fiery zealot speaks 'of reaping with lamentation the cursed fruits of toleration and forbearance in religion;' that he represents toleration as 'doing more towards the rooting of religion out of the hearts of men in seven years, than the enforcing of uniformity did in seventy;' and that he generally terms it 'a cursed, intolerable toleration;'—the reader will know enough of his spirit, and feel little inclination to examine his arguments. The design of the pamphlet, is to prove that Independents had been guilty of a great schism, in gathering churches out of Presbyterian congregations. This was the unpardonable sin of which they were then considered guilty. In many instances it was not true: for in reply to this very charge, the Prefacers to the Savoy Declaration say:—'Let it be farther considered, that we have

[k] Non-con. Mem. vol. ii. pp. 214—216.

not broke from them, or their order, by these differences, but rather they from us, and in that respect we less deserve their censure; our practice being no other, than what it was in our breaking from Episcopacy, and long before Presbytery, or any such form as now they are in, was taken up by them: and we will not say how probable it is, that the yoke of Episcopacy had been upon our neck to this day, if some such way, as formerly and now is, termed *Schism*, had not with much suffering been practised, and since continued in.'[l]

But Cawdry had more objects than one to accomplish by his work. It contained an Appendix, 'shewing the inconstancy of the Doctor; and the inconsistency of his former and present opinions.' The proof of Owen's inconstancy and inconsistency is this; in 1643, being then connected with the Presbyterians, he published a Treatise, in which he speaks on some points as a Presbyterian. In 1657, having been an Independent, for at least ten years, as all the world knew, he published a book, which contains sentiments bearing upon Independency: Ergo, Owen is inconsistent and unstable! Alas! for the logic of poor Daniel Cawdry. By such pitiful means do men sometimes endeavour to bring an opponent into disgrace.

Owen was not backward to reply. In the course of a few weeks he produced, 'A Review of the true nature of Schism, with a Vindication of the Congregational Churches in England, from the imputation thereof, unjustly charged on them, by Mr. Daniel Cawdry. Ox. 1657.' 12mo. pp. 181.[m]

[l] The first Presbyterian church in England was constituted at Wandsworth, in 1572. Neal i. 237. According to a statement already given in this volume, there was an Independent Church in London, in 1570; so that, if this be of any importance, Independency had the precedency of Presbytery in England. It should also be remembered, that there was much less difference between Independency and Presbytery, when the latter was first erected, than afterwards, when the Scots system was adopted, and attempted to be enforced. It is worthy of remark, that the English Presbyterian congregation, established by the exiles who fled from Queen Mary, had the ultimate determination of all disputes that might arise among the office-bearers, or between the office-bearers and the people. By one of the articles of their discipline, it was specially provided that in case of such differences, the congregation should be assembled, 'and that which they or the major part of them so assembling shall judge, or decree, the same to be a lawful decree, or ordinance, of sufficient force to bind the whole congregation, and every member of the same.' By another, it is provided, 'that every member may speak his mind in the congregation, so he speak quietly, and not against God's truth.' (Discourse of the troubles at Frankfort, printed in the Phœnix, ii. 136, 137.) If this be not Independency, it is at least very like it.

[m] Works, vol. xix. p. 255.

He assures us in the Preface, that it was the work of only four or five days, which was all the time he could devote to it, and all that he thought it deserved. With much firmness he meets, and repels the charges of his adversary, and strengthens his original position. He informs us, 'That such was his unhappiness, or rather happiness, in the constant intercourse he had with Presbyterians, both Scotch and English, utterly of another frame of spirit; that till he saw this treatise, he did not believe that there had remained one godly person in England of such dispositions, in reference to present differences.' He shews successfully, that Cawdry had completely failed in making out his charge of Schism and inconsistency against his brethren and himself, and concludes the defence of his changes, which we have fully narrated, by simply remarking, 'He that can glory, that in fourteen years he has not altered in his conceptions of some things, shall not have me for his rival.'

The controversy did not terminate here. Next year Cawdry returned to the charge, in 'Independency further proved to be a Schism,' &c. 12mo. 1658. pp. 158. This production abounds with personalities, though the author feels that he had already committed himself. Indeed, Cawdry seems to have been a contradiction hunter; for this is not his first attack, of the same kind, on Independency, and on the personal characters of those who professed it. He had published, in 1645, a 4to. volume, '*Vindiciae Clavium*,' against 'Cotton's Keys of the kingdom of Heaven.'—And in 1651, another 4to. in vindication of this —'The inconsistency of the Independent way with Scripture and itself;' in which he discovers the same rancorous spirit against Cotton and Hooker, which he does in his attack on Owen; and the same zealous desire to find contradictions, with little more success. The manuscript of Cotton's reply to the personal charges of Cawdry, had come into Dr. Owen's hands, just as his own answer had gone through the press. Immediately, therefore, after the second attack of Cawdry appeared, he published—'A Defence of Mr. John Cotton from the imputation of self-contradiction, charged on him by Mr. Daniel Cawdry: written by himself, not long before his death: To which is prefixed, an Answer to a late Treatise of the said Mr. Cawdry, about

the nature of Schism.' 12mo. Ox. 1658.[n] This small treatise is nearly equally divided between Cotton and Owen. The Doctor shews that Cawdry, and his brethren, were as loudly, and with more apparent justice, charged with being Schismatics by the Episcopalians, as the Independents were by the Presbyterians. 'For we deny,' says he, 'that since the gospel came into England, the Presbyterian government, as by them stated, was ever set up, except in the *wishes* of a party of men: so that here as yet, unless, as it lies in particular congregations, where our right is as good as theirs, none have separated from it that I know of, though many cannot consent to it. *The first ages we plead our's*, the following were unquestionably Episcopal.' p. 79.

Cotton, whose defence the Doctor published, was a person for whom he entertained very high respect. He was a man of extensive learning, solid piety, and laborious exertion in the cause of Christ. To his writings, Owen had been, in part, indebted for his own sentiments as an Independent. He was one of the first of the New England Congregationalists, who wrote on the subject of church government, and whose writings had a very extensive influence, both in that country, and in this. His work, on 'The Keys of the kingdom of Heaven,' contains the substance of the argument for the Independent polity; though he occasionally uses language which no Independent would now be disposed to employ, and speaks of the power of councils in a way that is not consistent with his leading principles. On the subject of the Magistrate's interference in religion, also, both his writings and his conduct prove, that, in some respects, he was very far from having correct or consistent sentiments. This was not the first attack he had to sustain on his Work on the Keys. It had been taken up by Baillie, in his 'Dissuasive from the errors of the times;' in which Cotton and his brethren were loaded with calumnies and defamation;—by Samuel Rutherford, with more argument and moderation, in his 'Due right of Presbyteries;' and by Cawdry, as I have already noticed, in his 'Vindiciae Clavium.' To all these, Cotton replied with much Christian temper, in his 'Way of the Congregational Churches cleared' from the aspersions of Baillie,

[n] Works, vol. xix. p. 339.

the contradictions of Cawdry, and the misconstructions of Rutherford. These works, which are mostly considerable volumes, shew how deeply the controversy about Church Government then occupied the minds of men; and how keenly some of the leading writers of the period engaged in it. Those who wish to know all that is possible to be said for Presbytery and Independency, have only to consult them. They contain, indeed, much extraneous matter, and too great a want of moderation on both sides: but they literally exhaust the subject, and I should suppose, must have exhausted the writers themselves, nearly as much as they do now the reader. It is matter of wonder and regret, that the subject could not be disposed of with less labour, and less acrimony. The last defence of Cotton, and Owen's vindicatory preface, put an end to his collisions with Cawdry, and to the Schism controversy: and here terminates our account of it.

In 1658, he published a work 'On Temptation; the nature and power of it; the danger of entering into it; and the means of preventing that danger,' &c. 12mo.° It is the substance of some sermons on Matt. xxvi. 41.; 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' It seems, like all his experimental writings, to have been called forth by his observation on the state of the times. He refers in the Preface to the awful providences of which the country still continued to be the subject; the spirit of error which had spread so widely; the divisions and contentions which so extensively prevailed; the temptations which had overthrown the faith of many; and the general backsliding from former holiness and zeal which had taken place. The treatise, however, has nothing local or temporary in its composition; and will continue to be useful as long as Christians shall be exposed to danger from the temptations of this world.

Owen's next work, which was produced partly in 1658, and partly in the following year, is a thick 12mo. volume, the nature and objects of which are fully explained in the extended title-page. 'Of the Divine original, authority, self-evidencing light, and power of the Scriptures. With an Answer to that Inquiry, How we know the Scriptures

° Works, vol. vii. p. 431.

to be the Word of God. Also, a Vindication of the purity and integrity of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old and New Testament; in some considerations on the Prolegomena, and Appendix to the late Biblia Polyglotta. Whereunto are subjoined, some exercitations about the nature and perfection of the Scripture, the right of interpretation, internal light, revelation, &c.' Oxon.[p]

This is rather a curious miscellany, to the whole contents of which a dedication is prefixed, to 'His reverend and worthy friends, the Prebends of Christ Church College, with all the Students in Divinity in that Society.' In the first tract are some very excellent observations, on what is generally understood by the internal evidence of the Bible; or that which satisfies the mind of a Christian, that in trusting to the revealed method of salvation, he is not following a cunningly devised fable. The Doctor rests his reasonings chiefly on two things—the *light* and *efficacy* of the truth. As it is the nature of light, not only to make other things manifest, but to bring the evidence of its own existence along with it; so the beamings of the majesty, truth, holiness, and authority of God in the Bible, distinguish it from all counterfeits, and commend it to the conscience, which it illuminates, sanctifies, and judges. The effects which it produces in the subjugation of human antipathies to itself, and the cure of moral disease, are also strong proofs of its heaven-derived power. It is the force of this internal evidence—the perception of the excellence, suitableness, and glory of the Divine discovery of mercy in the gospel, that induce the great body of Christians to receive it. Being made, 'the wisdom and the power of God' to their salvation, they have the strongest possible evidence of its Divine nature and origin. However complete and satisfactory the external testimony is, it does little, comparatively, for the conversion of men; as in most instances the gospel is rejected, not from want of evidence, but from hatred or indifference to its subject. The argument of Owen has been largely treated by others, though by few more fully or satisfactorily than himself. The same views are brought forward by Professor Halyburton, in a Treatise on the reason of Faith, appended to his work on natu-

[p] Works, vol. iv. p. 368.

ral and revealed religion, and by President Edwards, in his Treatise on Religious Affections.

While this tract was in the press, the Prolegomena and Appendix to the London Polyglot, were put into Owen's hands; in consequence of which, he delayed its publication till he examined that volume; and this examination produced the second tract in this work.[q] The object of the former treatise was to evince, 'That as the Scriptures were immediately given by God himself, his mind being in them represented to us; so by his providential dispensation his whole word is preserved entire in the original languages.' He now contended, that were any corruption allowed to have crept into the text of Scripture, all his reasonings would be subverted, the foundation of faith weakened, and the providence of God would appear to have been careless of the preservation of the Divine word. He was sadly afraid, if some of Walton's principles were admitted, that Popery would obtain advantage on the one hand, and infidelity on the other.

The 'Biblia Polyglotta Waltoni,' is by far the most valuable and important biblical work which ever issued from the British press; which has rendered immense service to the criticism and interpretation of the Scriptures, and conferred immortal honour on its projectors and editor. Several works of the same nature had been previously published abroad: as the Complutensian Polyglot of Cardinal Ximenes, in 1517; the Antwerp Polyglot, published at the expense of Philip the Second of Spain, in 1572; and the Paris Polyglot of Le Jay, in 1645. These works had all been edited in the most sumptuous manner, and at great expense; and what is very extraordinary, the world had been entirely indebted for them to the zeal and liberality of Catholic princes, prelates, or private individuals.[r] None of the Protestant princes, or patrons of learning, had yet attempted any work of this nature. It was reserved for England to wipe away this reproach; and that, not during the reign of her royal 'Defenders of the Faith,' and under the auspices of her richly beneficed Bishops; but during the reign of fanaticism, and under the patronage, though

[q] Works, vol. iv. p. 449.
[r] Le Long. Bib. Sacra, tom. i. pp. 13. 20. 27—33. Ed. 1709.

his name was afterwards ungraciously blotted out, of the Prince of fanatics—OLIVER CROMWELL!

Brian Walton, D. D. afterwards Bishop of Chester, was the principal projector and editor of the work; but was assisted by a number of the learned members of Cambridge and Oxford, in conducting it through the press. The Protector allowed five thousand reams of paper to be imported, free of duty, for it; and otherwise assisted in defraying the expense of the edition. It was finished in 1657, and by its fulness, accuracy, and convenience for consultation, far surpassed all former works of the kind, and remains to this day the most complete collection of the sacred writings ever published.

That Dr. Owen should have viewed this work with jealousy or disapprobation, appears, at first, somewhat surprising. But this surprise will cease when we reflect on the school of sacred learning in which he had been bred; to which, from principle, he was still attached; and to which the great body of Hebrew scholars then belonged. On the revival of learning, Hebrew literature was almost entirely in the hands of the Jews. The few Christians who acquired from them any acquaintance with it, received implicitly the dogmas of the Rabbins, who were supposed to be profoundly versed in the criticism of their sacred books. Two of these dogmas were inculcated as matters of faith, as well as questions of fact and criticism:—the immaculate purity of the Hebrew text, and the Divine origin of the points and accents. Little knowledge of the state of the Hebrew manuscripts then existed; the science of criticism was in its infancy: of some of the ancient versions there was no knowledge whatever; and of all of them the knowledge was exceedingly limited and imperfect. The Controversies between the Catholics and the Reformed, affected this as well as other subjects. The former unduly extolled the merits of the Vulgate, and depreciated the value of the original Scriptures; the latter went to the other extreme, and treated with unmerited disrespect the Latin version, the Septuagint, and all the other early translations. It was looked on as a point of the Protestant faith to maintain these views, and it was dangerous to an individual's character to deviate far from them. As general

knowledge increased, the true principles of criticism came to be better understood; the importance of the ancient versions was more justly estimated; and doubts began to be entertained respecting the two positions which had been hitherto most surely believed. Several learned men had hinted their suspicion of the Divine origin of the Hebrew points; but the first who assailed it at any length, was Lewis Capel, Professor of Hebrew in the Protestant college of Saumur. His 'Arcanum punctuationis Revelatum,' published in 1624; and his 'Critica Sacra,' in 1650, may be said to have begun and finished the controversy. The latter work—the labour of thirty-six years, brought such a mass of learning and evidence to bear upon the contested subjects, as left, comparatively, little to be done by others: yet such was the state of the literary republic at the time, that the work was refused admission to the press by the prohibitory principles of foreign Protestants, and after ten years' fruitless application for an imprimatur, it was at last printed at Paris by his son, who was a Catholic.[s]

The cause of the points, and of the Hebrew verity, was warmly maintained by the Buxtorfs, by the celebrated Glassius, and many others. The doctrines of Capellus were adopted and defended by Morinus, Vossius, Grotius, and other names of great celebrity. It is no impeachment, therefore, of Dr. Owen's learning, that he was of the ancient, rather than of the modern opinion, on this question. It was that which was supposed to be most advantageous to the Protestant interest, which the lovers of the word of God were considered as bound to maintain, and which many of the greatest scholars and theologians, then in Europe, most warmly supported. The question of the various readings has long since been set to rest by the immense collections of Mill and Kennicott, of De Rossi and Griesbach. On the subject of the points, different opinions are still entertained; but on all sides less importance is attached to them than when the controversy was first agitated. The progress of Hebrew literature has discovered, that the fears entertained by Owen, respecting the doctrines of the Polyglot were wholly groundless; and

[s] Walchii Bib. Theol. iv. pp. 268—270. Kennicott's Hist. of the Heb. Text vol. ii. of his Dissertations.

his language, that those who asserted that the Scriptures had suffered in the same manner with other books, bordered on atheism, was rash and improper as the event has proved. He disclaims all personal motives in the considerations he was led to throw out on the Polyglot; professes not to have been acquainted with Walton, and but little with his chief coadjutors; and pretends to no profound acquaintance with the department of literature, to which the Prolegomena and Appendix of the Polyglot properly belong. It is unnecessary now to canvass his objections. His fears magnified his apprehensions of danger, and multiplied his difficulties; and neither the cause of sacred learning, nor his own fame, would have suffered, had he never written a sentence on the subject.

He was not allowed to pass unanswered. Walton immediately published an able, but ill-tempered reply. 'The Considerator considered, and the Biblia Polyglotta Vindicated,' &c. 12mo. 1659, pp. 293. It cannot be concealed, and ought not to be denied, that Walton had greatly the better of his antagonist in this controversy. He possessed eminent learning, great critical acumen, and all that patient industry which was necessary for the successful prosecution of his very arduous undertaking. These qualifications, combined with abundance of leisure, with the assistance of learned associates, and with enthusiastic devotedness to the cause which he espoused, enabled him to bring his original work to a perfection that left all its predecessors far behind, and to meet any antagonist, with advantages, of whose importance he was sufficiently aware. The time and talents of Owen had been chiefly devoted to very different pursuits. In doctrinal, exegetical, and controversial theology, he had then but few equals, and no superior. In these departments he shone with distinguished lustre, and to their cultivation he had consecrated all the faculties, and ardour, of no ordinary mind. His public labours, and numerous writings, must have left him but little time, or inclination, for the dry pursuits of verbal criticism; and, on this account, it would have been better had he left the subject to others. But, while I freely concede the palm of victory in this contest to Walton, it is impossible to com-

pliment the spirit with which he fought for, and achieved it. He never deigns so much as to name Owen, although the work which his work answers was not anonymous. He breathes a tone of defiance and contempt, alike uncalled for and unsuitable; but probably dictated as much by the political changes in prospect, as by personal dislike of Owen. The ex-Vice-chancellor of Oxford though not then 'A son of the Church of England,'—a title to which Walton attached no ordinary importance, was not unworthy to be named with the most learned of her progeny; and even the Editor of the Polyglot was not entitled to school him like a dunce. His remarks on the motives and designs of Owen, are bitter and unchristian, and reflect dishonour only on himself. And surely the man, who, after enjoying the favour of Cromwell, had the ingratitude to erase his acknowledgment of it, and to insert the name of Charles, from whom his work had derived no benefit (though it afterwards procured a bishoprick for its author), has not the highest claims to credit for Christian simplicity and sincerity.[t] Let it only be remarked, in conclusion, that if John Owen could not have produced the Polyglot, still less could Bishop Walton have written the Commentary on the Hebrews.

'The Restoration which soon followed,' says Bishop Marsh, 'put an end to the controversy; and within a few months after Charles the Second's return, Dr. Walton was promoted to the See of Chester. The prejudices excited by Owen's pamphlet, and the false conclusions, which he drew from that variety of readings unavoidably resulting from a multitude of copies, did not, indeed, immediately subside: but those prejudices and apprehensions were, at

[t] In the latter part of the Preface to the Polyglot, when it was first published, the following passage occurs:—'Primo autem commemorandi, quorum favore chartam a vectigalibus immunem habuimus, quod quinque ab hinc annis a Concilio secretiori primo concessum, postea a *Serenissimo Protectore*, ejusque concilio operis promovendi causa, benigne confirmatum et continuatum erat.' When the Bible was presented to Charles II., in 1660, the two last leaves of the Preface were cancelled, and three others substituted in their room, in which the passage runs thus: 'Inter hos effusiore bonitate labores nostros prosecuti sunt (praeter eos quorum favore chartam a vectigalibus immunem habuimus), *Serenissimus Princeps D. Carolus*,' &c. Few of the copies with the original Preface were published, as Walton, probably, forcsaw the approaching change; but a republican copy, being a greater rarity, now brings a better price than a royal one. Mr. Todd's defence of Walton's conduct, both to Owen and Cromwell, is very unsatisfactory.

least, mitigated by the endeavours of Dr. Fell, who published, as he relates in his Preface, an edition of the Greek Testament for that purpose.'[u]

The third Tract in this volume of Owen, is in Latin,[x] and is chiefly aimed at the Quakers. It is rather singular that he should have criticised the Polyglot in English, and the Friends in Latin. This Walton took care to notice, not to the advantage of the Doctor. His 'Exercitationes adversus Fanaticos,' roused an adversary among the Quakers, not less fiery, though less learned, than the Editor of the Polyglot. This was Samuel Fisher, originally a Minister of the church, afterwards a Baptist, and finally a Quaker; a man, said to have been, of eminent virtue, piety, and learning.'[y] The reply to Owen is part of a 4to. volume of 600 pages, the title of which, I quote for the amusement of the reader. 'The Rustics' Alarm to the Rabbies; or, the Country correcting the University and Clergy, and not without good cause, contesting for the truth against the nursing mothers, and their children; in four apologetical exercitations; wherein is contained, as well a general account to all inquirers, as a general answer to all opposers of the most truly Catholic, and most truly Christ-like Christians, called Quakers, and of the true Divinity of their Doctrine. By way of entire intercourse held in special with four of the Clergies' chieftains, viz. John Owen, D. D. late Dean of Christ Church; Thomas Danson, M. A. once Fellow of Magdalen College, since one of the Seers for the town of Sandwich; John Tombes, B. D. once of Bewdly, since of Lemster; Richard Baxter, Minister at Kidderminster, another eminent master in this English Israel: which four *fore-men* hold the sense and senseless faith of the whole Fry, and write out the sum of what is, or is to be, said by the whole fraternity of fiery fighters against the true light of Christ, and its true children. By

[u] Marsh's Theol. Lect. vii. This edition of the Greek New Testament was published at the Oxford press, in 1675. It does not bear the name of Bishop Fell, but it was known to be edited by him. It is entitled, 'Novum Testamentum Graece. Accesserunt parallela Scripturae loca, necnon variantes lectiones ex plus 100 MSS. Codicibus, et antiquis versionibus collectae, *cum praefatione de origine variantium lectionum*,' &c. It is reckoned an excellent critical edition, having a greater number of various readings than had before been published. Le-Long. tom. i. pp. 500—502. Marsh's Michaelis, vol. ii. 452.

[x] Works, iv. p. 539.

[y] Crosby's Baptists, vol. i. pp. 359—363.

Samuel Fisher, who sometime went astray, as a lost sheep among the many shepherds, but is now returned to the Great Shepherd, and Overseer of the soul,' 1660. The confidence, abusive language, and absurdities of this production, are beyond description. Had Samuel Fisher designed to shew how wise and righteous he was in his own estimation, and how entirely he despised others, he could not have taken a more effectual method of doing it, than by writing this book. It is extraordinary that a body so measured in its phrases, and meek in its manners, as the Quakers appear to be, should have produced such fiery spirits as Fisher, whose intemperate language affords strong proof that he spake by another spirit than that of Jesus.

Richard Cromwell succeeded in peace to the chair of his father; but not possessing the talents, or the courage, which were necessary to occupy it—soon deserted it for the quieter and more comfortable repose of private life. To follow the ever-shifting scenes of the political stage, between the death of Cromwell and the restoration of the monarchy, would lead too far away from the immediate design of this work; I shall, therefore, confine myself entirely to the conduct of Owen, as far as it can be ascertained, during this busy and perplexing period.

Among the first acts of Richard's government was the summoning of a Parliament, which met on the 27th of January, 1659; and on the 4th of February following, we find Dr. Owen preaching before it at a private fast. The subject is, 'The glory and interest of nations professing the Gospel.'[a] From the dedication to the House, it appears that some false reports had been circulated about the sentiments of the discourse, respecting forms of civil government. Nothing of a political nature, however, occurs in the sermon; and he declares, that no sentiments of his would interfere with any form of civil government on earth, righteously administered. The minds of men were then in a state of great agitation, and in such circumstances, it is scarcely possible to speak publicly without occasioning suspicion or misconception.

The army was divided into two factions; the Wallingford-house party, which was for a Commonwealth; and

[a] Works, vol. xvi. p. 5.

the Presbyterian, which, with the majority of the Parliament, was for the Protector. The former party, of which Fleetwood and Desborough were the heads, invited Dr. Owen and Dr. Manton to their consultations. Dr. Owen went to prayer before they entered on business, but Manton being late before he came, heard a loud voice from within, saying, '*He must down, and he shall down.*' Manton knew the voice to be Owen's, and understood him to mean the deposing of Richard, and therefore would not go in.[b] Such is Neal's account of a very singular affair. If Manton heard no more than the words printed in italics, it is strange that he should have put such a construction on them. They might allude to the Pope, or the Grand Turk, as well as to Richard Cromwell. It is not like Owen's usual prudence to vociferate sedition, at a private meeting, so loudly as to be heard outside the door; and that before the Council had deliberated.[c]

In Baxter's own life, the most positive charges are preferred against Owen, as the grand instrument in pulling down Richard. 'He gathered a church at Lieut.-General Fleetwood's quarters, consisting of the active officers of the army. In this assembly, it was determined that Richard's Parliament must be dissolved, and then he quickly fell himself.—Dr. Owen was the chief that headed the Independents in the army, and afterwards had been the great persuader of Fleetwood, Desborough, and the rest of the officers of the army, who were his gathered church, to compel Richard to dissolve his Parliament.'[d] In attending to these statements, it must be remembered, that they proceed from a man, who, though honest in his intentions, entertained against the Independents, and Dr. Owen in particular, very violent prejudices. They were not made public till after Owen's death, when he could not defend himself; and though Sylvester, the Editor of Baxter's life, applied

[b] Neal, vol. iv. p. 209.

[c] The absurdity of the construction put on the words of Owen's prayer is the more evident, when it is acknowledged, that Dr. Manton did not so understand them till after Richard's deposition. Non-con. Mem. vol. i. p. 201. Mr. Palmer mentions in the Non-con. Mem. vol. iii. p. 401, that he had met with a manuscript defence of Mr. Baxter's conduct, in charging the deposition of Richard upon Dr. Owen, which he meant to deposit in the Red Cross-street Library; but no such manuscript was ever lodged there.

[d] Baxter's Life, part i. p. 101. part iii. p. 42.

to the Doctor's Widow to explain these passages if she could; she, probably thinking it an invidious task for any one to rake up the ashes of her husband, left him to do what he pleased. But the internal evidence is, by no means, in favour of the correctness of these statements. It would appear from them, that Owen had collected the Wallingford-house party, instead of being called in to pray at its deliberations, according to Neal:—that this party was Owen's church, and that among the other deliberations of this body, was introduced the propriety of deposing the Protector! Credat Judaeus Apella! Owen had no church at Wallingford-house; his stated residence was in Oxford. Some of the officers of the party were Independents, and, probably, looked up to him for occasional advice; which, I believe, was the amount of his connexion with their proceedings.

But we do not need to rest the defence of Owen on these general reasonings; we can adduce evidence of the most conclusive nature, in reply to these charges of political interference. He was accused in *Fiat Lux*, a book of which we shall afterwards speak, of being part of that dismal tempest, which overbore, not only church and state, but reason, right, honesty, all true religion, and even good nature. To this sweeping charge the Doctor replies: 'Let me inform you, that the author of the animadversions, (on Fiat Lux) is a person, who never had a hand in, nor gave consent to the raising of any war in these nations; nor to any political alterations in them, *no—not to any one that was amongst us during our revolutions:* but he acknowledges that he lived and acted under them, the things in which he thought his duty consisted; and challenges all men to charge him with doing the least personal injury to any, professing himself ready to give satisfaction to any one that can justly claim it.'[c] In Vernon's letter to a Friend, the charge of pulling down Richard is directly preferred against him. To which he answers: 'Of the same nature is what he affirms—of my being the instrument in the ruin of Richard Cromwell, *with whose setting up and pulling down, I had no more to do than himself;* and the same answer must be returned again, as to the Friar, *Men-*

[c] Vind. of Animad. on Fiat Lux, vol. xviii. p. 237.

titur impudentissime.'[f] Knowing these solemn asseverations, as Baxter must, or might have known; and as his Editor, Sylvester, probably knew, there is something very unchristian in still maintaining, on the authority of reports, charges of so serious a nature. 'To all these,' says the writer of Owen's Memoirs, 'we may add the testimony of the Rev. James Forbes of Gloucester, in a letter to a minister, now living in London. "There is yet a worthy minister alive, who can bear witness that Dr. Owen was against the pulling down of Richard Cromwell; for a message came to him, you must preach for Dr. Owen such a day at Whitehall, for he is sick, and the cause of his present illness is his dissatisfaction at what they are doing at Wallingford-house."'[g]

Notwithstanding the strength and fulness of the above evidence, there is in Calamy's continuation of Baxter's Life, another laboured attempt to fix the above charge on Dr. Owen.[h] All the circumstances we have noticed are brought forward, and another—an acknowledgment said to have been made by Owen to Baxter, that he was an agent in pulling down Richard's parliament, and himself. But can it be conceived that Owen should have made such an acknowledgment in private, and publicly declare what Baxter must have known to be false? To say nothing of his character, there would be a degree of folly in such conduct, of which we cannot suppose him to be guilty. From what he knew of Baxter's love of scribbling, he could not doubt that he would embrace the first opportunity of proclaiming from the house-top what had been told in his ear. And, accordingly, the Doctor was scarcely in his grave when this ungenerous attack on his memory was made.[i] Baxter was a rash man, and his repetition of a conversation many years after it had been held, is not to be compared with the public, and solemn testimony of a man of Owen's established reputation for religion and uprightness. Dr. Calamy's attempt to prove that Owen had told a public lie, is by no means honourable to him, and savours strongly of that party prejudice, which is marked in several parts of his otherwise valuable work.

[f] Reflections on a Slanderous Libel, Works, vol. xxi. p. 566. [g] p. 19.
[h] Vol. ii. pp. 917—922. [i] Baxter's answer to Owen's twelve arguments, p. 27.

In the memoirs of Ludlow, we have some account of the part which Owen took in the restoration of the Long Parliament, an event which occurred after the deposition of Richard; and which, if Owen favoured, it is a strong proof of his disinterestedness, as from the Long Parliament, he, and his party, could hope for little favour. From Ludlow's account, which we have every reason to believe correct, the fall of Richard was occasioned by various concurring circumstances:—the indecision of the Protector himself, divisions in the army and offence given by him to some of the leading officers, his taking part with the Presbyterians, and exciting fears among the Independents for the safety of religion, and religious liberty. After he had been brought down and his parliament dissolved, the republican party were strongly pressed to restore the Long Parliament. It was alleged that there was not a sufficient number of members left to make up a parliament. 'Upon this Dr. John Owen,' says Ludlow, 'having desired me to give him a list of their names, I delivered him one; wherein I had marked those who had sat in the house since the year 1648, and were yet alive, amounting to the number of about 160. The Doctor having perused it, carried it to those at Wallingford-house.'[k] In the end the Long Parliament was restored, and rewarded its restorers with restrictive laws and deprivation of places.

We need not wonder at the misrepresentations to which Owen, and others similarly placed, were exposed. The period between the death of Oliver and the restoration of Charles was exceedingly unsettled. Owen must have been filled with various fears and anxieties. The return of a civil war, the establishment of Presbyterian uniformity, or the restoration of monarchical despotism, must have been equally frightful to contemplate; and yet one or other of these events seemed unavoidable. To prevent, if possible, the effusion of blood, the reorganization of civil tyranny, or the exercise of ecclesiastical oppression, was the duty of every man who wished well to his country, and who loved religion. To err in such circumstances, by giving a well meant, though eventually, it might prove an injudicious advice, is more honourable both to the patriot and the Chris-

[k] Ludlow's Mem. vol. ii. p. 181.—Ed. 1751.

tian than cold neutrality, which looks with indifference on the tempest, and afterwards smiles at the calm.

Owen preached before Parliament for the last time on Sabbath, the 8th of May 1659; being the second day after it had met.[l] In the month of August following, the Congregational Churches in London desired leave to raise three regiments for the parliament, and obtained its consent to do so.[m] They had become exceedingly alarmed for their liberty, and not without cause. Monk had for some time been playing a part. Formerly he had acted with the Independents; now he was seemingly disposed to support the Presbyterians. Apprehensions were entertained of the march of his army into England; and to ascertain his real sentiments and intentions, Caryl and Barker were despatched to Scotland with a letter to him from Dr. Owen, in name of the Independent Churches, to which he was considered as belonging. With the ministers were associated Col. Whally and Major-General Gough, both members of the same communion. At Newcastle they were joined by Mr. Hammond, and in Scotland by Mr. Collins, both very respectable and useful Independent ministers.[n] They had an interview with Monk, and some other officers of the army, at Holyrood-house. Caryl told him they came not to deliver their sense of the General's proceedings, but the sense of the churches; which had given them no commission to enter into the merits of the cause, nor to debate whether Lambert's action in turning out the parliament were justifiable or not; but only to present it to his Lordship, as their opinion, that he had not a call to appear against it in that manner;—that his Lordship had only in charge to keep *Scotland* quiet, and was not bound to take notice of any differences that should happen in England. He proceeded to assign reasons why the General should go on no farther; and, finally, assured him, that whatever should happen would be laid at his door, as he would be considered the originator of the war.[o]

The reasonings of the Commissioners with Monk proceed entirely on the ground of the connexion subsisting between the churches and him; by which they considered

[l] Whitelocke's Memoirs, p. 679.
[m] Ibid. p. 683.
[n] Skinner's Life of Monk, p. 101.
[o] Baker's Chron. p. 587. Ed. 1733.

themselves bound to expostulate with him, on the impropriety of involving the nation in war, occasioning much evil to his brethren, and, perhaps, being instrumental in bringing back a state of things, ruinous both to civil and religious freedom. They could make nothing, however, of Monk. He sent them back with a letter, addressed to Dr. Owen, Mr. Greenhill, and Mr. Hook, full of unmeaning compliments, hypocritical professions, and promises never intended to be fulfilled.[p] It must have satisfied them, that they had every thing to fear, and nothing to hope, from his march into England. His character was a compound of selfishness and hypocrisy. He swallowed oaths without ceremony, and broke them without remorse. He deceived all parties, but stood true to his own interest to the end.[q] The Independents offered to stand by their friends in Parliament, and to force back Monk into Scotland. Owen and Nye had frequent consultations with Whitelocke and St. John; and, at a private treaty with the officers at Wallingford-house, offered to raise one hundred thousand pounds for the use of the army, provided it would protect them in their religious liberties; which they were apprehensive Monk and the Presbyterians designed to subvert. But those officers had lost their credit, their measures were broken and disconcerted.—One party was for a treaty; and another for the sword. Their old veteran regiments were dislodged from the city, and Monk in possession.[r]

The anxiety of the Independents is easily accounted for. Their very existence was at stake; for they had nearly as much to fear from the power of the Presbyterians, as from the return of the king. They only wanted protection and liberty; but these moderate demands they knew neither party would agree to, if once it obtained power. It does them honour, that they were willing to make any sacrifice, rather than part with privileges more valuable than life itself. The Presbyterians, however, completely predominated. Every thing was in a train for the restoration of the king, to whom they looked forward with all the fondness and confidence of a promised saviour. Among other preparations for this event, on the 3d of March 1660,

[p] Neal, vol. iv. pp. 238—240. [q] Burnet, vol. i. p. 138.
[r] Neal, vol. iv. p. 242.

the question between Dr. Reynolds and Dr. Owen, about the Deanery of Christ Church, was referred by the House of Commons to a Committee, and on the 13th of the same month, by a vote of the House, Owen was discharged, and Reynolds restored to his place.[s] Previously to this, he and Goodwin had been removed from preaching at St. Mary's, Wood says, by the endeavours of the Presbyterians. If this was so, it was a most ungrateful return for the kindness and liberality, with which Owen had uniformly treated that party. The Doctor took his ejection, not very meekly, according to Vernon, who represents him as saying: 'I have built seats at Maries, but let the Doctors find auditors, for I will preach at Peter's in the east.'[t]

Thus terminated Dr. Owen's connexions with the Commonwealth, and with the public politics of his time. That they never proved a snare to him, or involved him in conduct and discussions foreign from the business of the Christian ministry, I am unable to affirm. That many of the scenes, through which he passed, were not to his liking, we have his own authority for believing; and that his mind sustained little injury from his circumstances, his writings sufficiently prove. The very reports and misrepresentations, however, to which his conduct gave rise, shew how dangerous a thing it is for a Minister of the Gospel to be connected with political parties, or concerned in their proceedings. In ordinary circumstances this can be easily avoided; but Owen must have been often so situated, as not to have the power of acting entirely in his own hands. When this is the case, it becomes us to judge charitably, even when we cannot fully approve. With his talents, and the degree of popularity, which, in the providence of God, he obtained, he probably could seldom have acted very differently from what he did; and wherever our information is sufficient, his conduct admits of defence, rather than apology. That his motives were pure, and his aims disinterested; that he had at heart the interests of religion, and the welfare of his country, are beyond a doubt. If he could not keep himself entirely unspotted from the world, or at all times justly avoid its censure, we have only to remember what he himself would have been the first to confess,

[s] Whitelocke, p. 699. [t] Letter to a Friend, p. 28.

that he was a sinful, fallible creature, who made no claim to perfection. But how few, comparatively, have acted such a part on such a theatre, and borne away so large a portion of fair and solid reputation; and were our knowledge of his history more perfect, I am satisfied that it would be increased, rather than diminished. Henceforth we must follow his steps through other scenes; less splendid in the estimation of the world, but more important in themselves, and more glorious in the eye of God;—defending the faith from the press, illustrating it in the conventicle, and exemplifying its influence in the tribulation and patience of Jesus Christ.

CHAP. X.

Owen retires to Stadham—Effects of the Restoration—Venner's insurrection—The fifth monarchy men—Difference between Owen and Clarendon—The Act of Uniformity—Owen writes on the Magistrates' power in Religion—His Primer for children—His Theologoumena*—His Animadversions on Fiat Lux—Cane's Reply—Owen's Vindication—Difficulty of finding a licence for it—Interview with Lord Clarendon—Invitation to New England—Sufferings of the Dissenters—Relieved for a time by the plague and fire of London—Owen writes various Tracts—Preaches more regularly in London—Publishes a Catechism on the Worship and Discipline of the Church—Answered by Camfield—Discussions between Baxter and Owen, respecting a union of Presbyterians and Independents—Failure of the attempt—Owen receives a Legacy—Publishes on Indwelling Sin—On the* 130*th Psalm—The first volume of his Exposition of the Hebrews—Review of the whole of that work.*

After the Doctor's deprivation of the Deanery of Christ Church, he retired to Stadham, the place of his birth, where he had purchased an estate, and where during his residence in Oxford, he had collected a small congregation. He continued to preach to this society for some time, and was resorted to by many from Oxford, to whom perhaps he had formerly been useful, and who now followed him to be comforted and instructed by his labours. The congregation, however, was in a short time broken up by the Oxford Militia, and the persecution became so violent that the Doctor had to remove from place to place for security.[a]

[a] Memoirs, p. 32.

The Restoration of Charles II. brought many woes to Britain. He was not only totally destitute of religion, but without sincerity; and indifferent to every thing but pleasure and sensual gratification. The despotic spirit of the Stuarts lost nothing by his misfortunes and sufferings. He returned like a conqueror rather than an exile; to take possession of a hereditary throne and an unlimited sceptre, instead of accepting the conditional and defined sovereignty of a free and independent people. The mania of royalty was now as wild as ever the frensy of republicanism had been; and under its excitement the people forgot that they had rights to maintain and conditions to prescribe, as well as gifts to bestow. What was thus generously surrendered, Charles had neither the honour nor the generosity to respect. He imported largely of French politics, licentiousness, and irreligion; so that in a very short time the appearance of the court, and the aspect of the country, were entirely changed. The decidedly religious characters of the former period held fast their integrity; but the lukewarm, and those who had only adopted the profession of the day, either laid it quietly aside, or turned out bitter enemies to their former friends. But as all was not genuine religion which had assumed its appearance during the Commonwealth; so more of it remained afterwards than might have been supposed from the open profaneness which abounded. A numerous body of enlightened and conscientious men patiently endured the trial of cruel mockings, and bonds and imprisonments, and many of them the loss of all things for Christ's sake. They steadily resisted the torrent of infidelity and corruption, and ultimately obtained an important triumph.

Shortly after the Restoration, the insurrection of Venner and the Fifth Monarchy men brought much reproach on the Dissenters, and afforded the court a favourable and wished-for opportunity to interfere with their privileges. Baptists and Quakers as well as the monarchy men were forbidden to assemble publicly; and Independents, though not named, were considered as involved in the same condemnation. The respective bodies of Dissenters published declarations expressing their detestation of the principles and practices of these wild fanatics. The document issued

by the Independents, disowns the personal reign of Jesus on the earth, as dishonourable to him, and prejudicial to his church; and expresses its abhorrence of the propagation of this or any other principle by violence. It refers to the Savoy Declaration for the sentiments of the body respecting civil magistracy, and the obligation to obey it; and declares that they cease not to pray for all sorts of blessings to the king and his government. This paper is signed by twenty-five of their ministers, among whom the name of Owen does not occur. It is probable that he was in the country when the insurrection took place, and might not have an opportunity of being present at the meeting in which the declaration was drawn up. His sentiments, however, were quite in unison with it.[b]

In justice to the Fifth Monarchy men it ought to be stated, that all the patrons of this sentiment cannot be considered friendly to the measures of Venner, Harrison, and the other fierce republicans and visionaries by whom this uproar had been made. The religious sentiment is as old as some of the Fathers of the church, and is only a modification of the doctrine of the millenium; which has been held by highly respectable individuals of various communions both before and since the Commonwealth. The learned and celebrated Joseph Mede, and his contemporary Dr. Henry More, held sentiments nearly allied to those of the persons who contended for the personal reign of Jesus on earth. I have now before me a folio volume, by Nathaniel Homes, a fifth monarchy man; 'The Resurrection revealed, or the dawning of the day-star,' &c.—a book full of curious learning, in which the sentiments of Mede are advocated; but without any of that grossness and carnality which are supposed to have distinguished this class of persons. Others of them also were deserving of respect both for learning and piety. It is only when religious sentiment induces such practices as are incompatible with public peace or good morals, that the restraints of authority are called for. Among the German Anabaptists, and English Fanatics, whose sentiments were on various points the same, there were probably many whose private characters will be found at another day to have been very different

[b] Neal, iv. pp. 311, 312.

from that which the judgment of man has pronounced, and which the proceedings of the general body would seem to warrant.

Wood expresses his astonishment that Owen was not excepted from the benefit of the Act of Oblivion passed after the king's return. But this I suppose was never contemplated. The royal party knew too well the character and conduct of the Doctor, to involve themselves unnecessarily in the odium of such a measure. The same writer tells us, that Sir Edward Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, then Chancellor, treated Owen with great kindness and respect, and wished him, if he would not conform, to employ his time in writing against the Roman Catholics, and not to disturb the public peace by keeping conventicles; which Owen promised to do. But afterwards being found preaching to thirty or forty persons at Stadham, he was complained of to the Chancellor. When Owen understood this, he wrote to Dr. Barlow, whom he had obliged in the same manner in Cromwell's time, to endeavour to make his peace with Hyde. In consequence of which, Barlow went from Oxford to Cornbury for the purpose; but the Chancellor told him, that Dr. Owen was a perfidious person, who had violated his engagements, and therefore he would leave him to suffer the penalty of the laws which he had broken.[c]

Independently of any positive evidence, we might, from Owen's well known principles, be fully assured that he never would have promised to abstain from preaching when he had an opportunity. But he meets the charge directly himself. Wood's account is borrowed chiefly from Vernon, in reply to whom the Doctor says, 'There is not any thing in substance or circumstance that can lay the least pretence to truth in what he reports to have happened between the then Lord Chancellor and me; which, as I have good witness to prove the mistake that fell out between us, not to have been occasioned by me, so I much question whether this author was informed of the untruths he reports by Dr. Barlow; or whether he ever gave his consent to use his name publicly to countenance such a defamatory libel.'[d]

[c] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 557.
[d] Reflections on a Slanderous Libel. Works, vol. xxi.

As Owen held no living in the Church, he was not involved in the consequences of the Act of Uniformity. All that he and those with whom he acted sought, was toleration or liberty of conscience. A comprehension within the pale of the establishment was incompatible with their principles, and unsuited to their wishes. It does not fall within the design of this work to notice the discussions between the Court and the Presbyterians, about the Act of Uniformity; as the subject of these memoirs had no connexion with them. But the discussions themselves, and the treatment which followed, suggest some important reflections. They shew the folly of attempting to reconcile the principles and practice of the kingdom of Christ, with those of a worldly government. The Court was determined to yield nothing; the Nonconformists were disposed to yield every thing which they could with a good conscience, to retain the patronage of the state. Expediency rather than Scripture was the rule by which both parties proceeded. They did not clearly perceive that the church is a society altogether different in its principles and constitution from the state, and therefore ought to be independent of its interference. The Ministers wished too much to get the earth to help the woman, while the court was determined to make the woman help the earth. Hence the disputes between them were interminable; for the farther they proceeded the more widely they diverged.

The Bartholomew ejection was a strong measure, but naturally to be expected from the spirit of the court; and, except on account of the individual suffering which it occasioned, ought not to be deplored. The Church of England was unworthy of the men whom she cast out; while they were taught by their ejection better views of the Christian dispensation, and in the enjoyment of a pure conscience and the liberty of Christ, possessed a happiness which the benefices of the church without them could not confer. They originated many of those societies which have preserved the light of Evangelical truth in the country; and which without that event would not in all probability have existed. Their conduct was a noble testimony to the power of religion, to which, as might have been expected, the seal of Divine approbation was attached.

Soon after the Doctor had left Oxford, he wrote a paper containing 'Resolutions of certain questions concerning the power of the supreme Magistrate about religion and the worship of God, with one about tithes.'[e] Lond. 4to. 1659. This tract was written in a great hurry, in answer to three questions sent him the night before, by some correspondent. The Doctor's consistency would have lost nothing had he never answered them. He contends for the exercise of a certain kind of power by the civil magistrate in the way of restraint, and also for the lawfulness of tithes, or of a legal provision of a similar nature for the ministers of the gospel. It is curious enough that these should be his avowed sentiments after he had been deprived of all state provision. It shews at least that his sentiments never had much connexion with his worldly circumstances, and secures his character against the charge of time-serving, or insincerity. It was answered shortly after by a Quaker, in a 'Winding sheet for England's ministry, which hath a name to live, but is dead.' The following year he produced 'a Primer for Children.' No copy of this small tract is known to be in existence. It was written, according to Wood, though he confesses he had not seen it, for the purpose of training up children in Independency; a very heinous crime in the opinion of some people, as if it were more unlawful to educate children in Independency than in any other system. Owen was fully convinced that if children were not trained up in the fear of the Lord, it would signify little in what else they were instructed.

His next work was one of his most learned and laboured performances, and shews the transitions of which he was capable, from writing Tracts and Primers to Latin systems of Theology. '*Theologoumena Pantodapa, etc.*, or six Books on the nature, rise, progress, and study of true Theology. In which also the origin and growth of true and false religious worship, and the more remarkable declensions and restorations of the Church are traced from their first sources. To which are added digressions concerning Universal grace—the origin of the sciences—notes of the Roman Church—the origin of letters—the ancient Hebrew letters—Hebrew Punctuation—Versions of the

[e] Works, vol. xix. p. 383.

Scriptures—Jewish rites, &c.' Oxford, 1661, 4to. pp. 534.[f] It was reprinted at Bremen in 1684, and at Franeker in 1700. It has no dedication, but there is a long Preface and a Latin Poem at the end of it, eulogizing the work, and giving a kind of analysis of it, by T. G. whom he calls '*Clarissimus Symmystes*,' and whom I suppose to be Thomas Goodwin.

The title page of this work, which I have translated at length, explains the nature and variety of its contents. It is in fact a critical History of Religion, somewhat of the same nature with Jurieu's Critical History of Religious worship, with some of the discussions of Gale's court of the Gentiles.

In the first book, he treats of Theology in general, of the natural theology of the first man, and of the corruption and loss of it by the entrance of sin. In the second book, he discusses the Adamic or Antediluvian Theology. Book third treats of the Noachic or Postdiluvian Theology, and the progress of Idolatry till the time of Abraham. Book fourth is on the Abrahamic and Mosaic Theology. In the next book, he examines the corruption, reformation, and abolition of the Mosaic system. The last book treats of the Evangelical Theology and the proper method of studying it. The work discovers a vast extent of reading and a profound acquaintance with the whole compass of profane and sacred learning. On doctrinal subjects it contains the same sentiments with his English works; in the digressions are some curious speculative discussions; his *notes* of the Roman Church accurately mark her character and corruption; and his views of the study of Theology deserve the attention of every student.

This work is very incorrectly printed. In an advertisement to three pages of errata at the end, the Doctor blames the printer for great carelessness, at the same time he mentions, that he was absent during the printing of it, '*a capite ad calcem*.' There are mistakes or blunders in almost every page; on which account, the continental Editions are preferable to the author's own, as they are free from the numerous errors which deform it. A translation of this work was partly prepared by the late Rev. John Hooper; but I fear it is not left in a state fit for publication. Unless a

[f] This work has not been published in the present edition of his Works.

good deal of freedom were used with the original, I doubt whether it would be a readable book in English; and the information which it contains has long been superseded by numerous valuable works in every department of Theology of which it treats.

Following the advice of Lord Clarendon, his next publication was on the Popish controversy. In 1661, a 12mo. volume appeared, entitled 'Fiat Lux, or a general conduct to a right understanding betwixt Papist and Protestant, Presbyterian and Independent, by J. V. C. a friend to men of all religions.' The author of this work was John Vincent Cane, a Franciscan Friar, who had written several things before on the Catholic controversy. *Fiat Lux* contains a great display of moderation, and a large portion of craft. It proposes to shew that there is no reason for men quarrelling about religion;—that every thing is so obscure, no one ought to set himself up as a guide to another;—that the various sects of Protestants have no advantage over one another, and none of them any over Popery, which is innocent in its principles and unblameable in its conduct to them all. The inference to be drawn from its miscellaneous discussions is, that the only remedy for all existing evils and differences is returning to the bosom of an infallible church. Rome alone is *Terra firma*, and all is sea beside.

The state of the country rendered a production of this nature, however feeble and contemptible in itself, an object of attention. The well-known leanings of the court, the incessant vigilance and craft of the emissaries of Popery, and the tendency of human nature to embrace its most unscriptural and dangerous sentiments, justified an immediate reply to this pretended friend of light. It was put into Owen's hands by a person of honour, probably Clarendon, with a request that he would answer it. Accordingly in 1662, appeared 'Animadversions on Fiat Lux, by a Protestant,' 12mo. pp. 440.[g] In an address to the reader, he says, 'the author of Fiat seems at first to be a Naphtali giving goodly words; but though the voice we hear is sometimes that of Jacob, the hands are the hands of Esau.' He extracts out of the mass of confusion of which it is composed, all the leading principles or statements, and replies to them

[g] Works, vol. xviii. p. 1.

with great spirit and pertinency. He pretends not to defend the peculiar sentiments of any party, but joins issue on the grand principles of Protestantism. It contains a larger portion of irony than is usually found in the Doctor's writings, which renders it, though on a subject now stale, but still important, tolerably pleasant to read.

To Owen's animadversions, Cane published a short reply, in an epistle to the author; in which he seemed less anxious to defend his former treatise than to find out the animadverter, and to excite popular odium against him, as one of the demagogues of the commonwealth. This led Owen to meet him again in a larger work, with his name prefixed to it. 'A vindication of the Animadversions on Fiat Lux, wherein the principles of the Roman Church, as to Moderation, Unity, and Truth, are examined: and sundry important controversies concerning the rule of Faith, Papal Supremacy, the Mass, Images, &c. are examined,' Lond. 1664, 8vo. pp. 564.[h] From this work we have already extracted some passages in reply to the personal charges of the Friar, to which it is therefore unnecessary again to refer. The work itself is not limited to replying to Cane; it embraces the substance of the Popish controversy. It is divided into twenty-four chapters, in each of which he treats of some important fact or principle in dispute. It abounds with learning and strong reasoning, and shews how much the author was at home on the minutest parts of that widely extended controversy. Every department of theology he had cultivated with diligence, and he had only to bend his mind for a little to any one subject to make the rich stores of his varied learning bear upon it with the happiest effect.

For this work, strange as it may appear, the Doctor found it difficult to procure an *imprimatur*. The Bishops, who were privately enemies to Owen's reputation, and some of them secret friends to Popery, had little inclination to promote the one, or to assist in injuring the other. They alleged that he did not give the title of SAINT to the apostles and evangelists, and that he attempted to prove there was no evidence of Peter having been at Rome! To the first objection the Doctor replied, that the designa-

[h] Works, vol. xviii. p. 211.

tion of APOSTLE was more distinguished than that of *Saint*, in which all the people of God were included. But to please them, he yielded to make that addition. He would, however, consent to make no alteration on the other point, unless they would prove that he was in a mistake; and he would rather that his work should never see the light, than he would expunge what he had written. Such was the temper of the Episcopal Inquisition at this time, that in all probability his book would have been suppressed, had not Sir Edward Nicholas, one of the principal secretaries of state, a man of unblemished character, and highly esteemed for his public and private virtues, written to the Bishop of London to license it. It accordingly appeared with the *imprimatur* of Thomas Greig, domestic chaplain to his Lordship.[i]

These works appear to have gained him the favour of Lord Clarendon, who employed Sir Bulstrode Whitelocke, to procure an interview with him; in which his Lordship expressed his approbation of the service done by the Doctor's Anti-popish writings, and intimated that he had more merit than any English Protestant of the period. He at the same time offered him preferment in the church if he would conform; and had he complied, the highest honours of the hierarchy would doubtless have been open to him. This, however, the Doctor, for obvious reasons, declined. He was too much an *Independent* in every sense, to barter his freedom for office, or honour, or wealth. His Lordship expressed his surprise that a person of his learning should have embraced the *novel* opinion of Independency. To which the Doctor replied, that he had indeed spent some part of his time in acquiring an acquaintance with the history of the church; and he would engage to prove against any Bishop his Lordship would appoint to meet him, that the Independent form of Church Government prevailed for several hundred years after Christ. They conversed also on the subject of religious toleration. The Chancellor asked Owen what he would require.—He answered, 'Liberty to those who agreed in doctrine with the Church of England.' This was all which he then thought it prudent

[i] Mr. Samuel Mather also replied to Fiat Lux, in 'A Defence of the Protestant Religion.' Dublin, 1671, 4to.

or necessary to mention; as, with the exception of the Papists, there were very few in the country who held doctrines different from those of the Church of England. How Clarendon understood or repeated this remark is uncertain; but it seems to have occasioned a report that the Doctor was unfriendly to the toleration of any but those who held the doctrinal sentiments of the Church. This, however, is so contrary to his avowed sentiments and general conduct, as to require no refutation. He was perhaps unfriendly to the toleration of Catholics, for reasons in which many of the warmest friends of liberty have agreed with him. Popery has been the invariable and constant enemy of civil and religious freedom, and the strongest support of oppression and arbitrary power. It is a deadly nightshade, under whose baneful influence all the moral and social virtues of man are either stunted in their growth, or entirely destroyed. The very love of liberty induces aversion to the encouragement of a sect, which, if consistent, must wage eternal war with freedom; and which can only flourish by prostrating the understanding, enslaving the conscience, and extinguishing the moral feelings of men.

In 1662, he published 'A Discourse concerning Liturgies, and their imposition.' 4to.[k] This is a well written and well reasoned tract, in ten chapters. His object is not to find fault with the Liturgy of the Church of England, or with any other prescribed formulary; but to prove that such forms have no foundation for their authority in the word of God, and that it is unlawful to impose, and sinful to submit to their imposition. The principle which these forms of human composition involve, is of vast importance; and I know not where in so small a compass this principle is so well stated and so ably opposed as in this work. His future colleague, Mr. Clarkson, produced one on the same subject, with a very similar title. Owen's work has not been answered to my knowledge.

In the end of the year 1663, the Doctor received an invitation from the first Congregational Church of Boston, in New England, of which Mr. Cotton, and afterwards Mr. John Norton, had been Pastor. The latter having died in the month of April preceding, the church was desirous of

[k] Works, vol. xix. p. 395.

filling up his place with Dr. Owen. Their application was seconded by the following very respectful letter, from the General Court of Massachusets, in which he is urged to accept the call, from the important field of usefulness which it presented, and from the similarity of their sentiments and circumstances to his own:—

'REVEREND SIR,

It hath pleased the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, who giveth no account of his matters, to take unto himself, that pious and eminent minister of the gospel, Mr. John Norton, late teacher of the Church of Christ in Boston, whose praise is in all the Churches; the suitable and happy repair of which breach is of great concernment, not only to that Church, but to the whole country. Now, although most of us are strangers to you, yet having seen your labours, and heard of the grace and wisdom communicated to you from the Father of lights; we thought meet to write these, to second the call and invitation of that church unto yourself, to come over and help us; assuring you it will be very acceptable to this Court, and we hope to the whole country, if the Lord shall direct your way hither, and make your journey prosperous to us. We confess the condition of this wilderness doth present little that is attractive, as to outward things; neither are we unmindful, that the undertaking is great, and trials many that accompany it; the persons that call you, are unworthy sinful men, of much infirmity, and may possibly fall short of your expectation (considering the long and liberal day of grace afforded us); yet, as Abraham and Moses, being called of God, by faith forsook their country and the pleasures thereof, and followed the Lord, the one not knowing whither he went, the other to suffer affliction with, and bear the manners of the people of God in the wilderness: and God was with them and honoured them: so we desire that the Lord would clear your call, and give you his presence. You may please to consider those that give you this call, as your brethren and companions in tribulation; and are in this wilderness for the faith and testimony of Jesus; and that we yet enjoy, through the distinguishing favour of God, the pleasant things of Zion in peace and liberty. And while the Lord shall see meet to

entrust us with this mercy, we hope no due care will be found wanting in the Government here established, to encourage and cherish the churches of Christ, and the Lord's faithful labourers in his vineyard. Thus praying to the God of the spirits of all flesh, to set a man over this congregation of the Lord, that may go in and out before them, and make your call clear, and voyage successful to us; that if the Lord shall vouchsafe to us such a favour, you may come to us in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; with our very kind love and respect,

We remain, your very loving friends,

JOHN ENDICOTT,

in the name, and by appointment of the General Court, sitting at Boston, in New England, the 20th October, 1663.'[k]

What answer the Doctor returned immediately to this affectionate invitation, I am unable to say; but it would seem from a letter of Captain Gookins, one of the Assistant Governors of Massachusets, dated July 1666, that he had been after some time inclined to comply with the request; but certain circumstances deterred him. 'Dr. Owen,' he says, 'and some choice ones, who intended to come with me, are diverted, and that not from hopes of better times in England; but from fears of worse in America, which some new counsels gave them occasion for: so that in all probability a new cloud is gathering, and storm preparing for us.'[l] It is said he was stopped by orders from Court, after some of his property was actually embarked.[m]

The sufferings to which conscientious Dissenters were exposed, were every day increasing in severity. It was not deemed sufficient to drive them out of the church; it was thought necessary to make them miserable afterwards.

[k] This letter was extracted from the Public Records of Massachusets, by Dr. Gordon, and by him transmitted to the late Mr. Palmer, of Hackney; who inserted it in the Protestant Dissenter's Magazine, vol. iii. p. 477. Mr. Endicott was Governor of the colony, and a very excellent and much respected man. He went to Salem in the year 1628, and had the chief command of those who first settled there, in whose difficulties and sufferings he largely participated. He continued there till the jurisdiction of Massachusets desired his removal to Boston, for the more convenient administration of justice, as Governor of the Colony; to which office he was elected for many years with little intermission. He served God and his country, till old age and infirmities coming upon him, he fell asleep in the Lord, in 1665, in the 77th year of his age.—Morton's New England Mem. pp. 176, 177.

[l] Hutchinson's Hist. of Massachusets, vol. i. p. 226.

[m] Non-con. Mem. vol. i. p. 202.

Dr. Owen had his own share of these sufferings. He preached at Stadham as long as he was able, and then removed to London, where he lived mostly in private, and preached as often as he conveniently could. The Act of 1664, for suppressing Conventicles, was designed, according to Rapin, to drive the Non-conformists to despair, or to commit real crimes against the state. Many were led by it to adopt a species of conformity to which Independents and Baptists objected as unscriptural, as countenancing the measures of Government, and as approving of a persecuting church. Many and ingenious were the measures resorted to, to evade the laws, and to enjoy the privilege of worshipping God. The Oxford, or five mile Act, however, was intended to cut off all these resources. All who refused to swear to passive obedience, in the most absolute sense, were prohibited from coming within five miles of any corporated town or borough. The iniquity of the Act was the greater, that it passed during the plague of London, where many of the Non-conformist ministers had courageously ventured themselves to preach to the living, and administer consolation to the dying.

The plague was followed by the terrible fire of London, in which great part of the city was destroyed, and most of the Churches laid in ruins. This disastrous event was placed, I believe unjustly, to the charge of the Papists, and raised a terrible storm against them; while it occasioned a partial mitigation of the laws against Dissenters. Temporary places of worship, called tabernacles, were fitted up, in which many of the Non-conformists preached to crowded and attentive audiences. Owen, Goodwin, Nye, Griffiths, Brooks, Caryl, Barker, and other Independents, fitted up rooms or other places for public service, and for a little time, were permitted to meet unmolested. Baxter says, before this Owen had kept off—as if he had been more ashamed or afraid of suffering than his brethren. But this is only one of the many instances of Baxter's private feeling towards Owen.[n]

The fall of Lord Clarendon in the following year, who had been the chief adviser of the unconstitutional and rigorous measures pursued by the Court, together with the

[n] Baxter's own Life, part iii. p. 19.

temporary disgrace of Archbishop Sheldon, and Bishop Morley, who were guilty actors in the same proceedings, contributed to relax the exertions made to ruin the Dissenters. Clarendon is said to have remarked, that his affairs never prospered after the Oxford Act. The king began, or pretended, to see the selfish and unjust policy of some of the late proceedings, and professed a willingness to give relief to his persecuted subjects.

About this time, for I cannot ascertain the exact dates of all of them, Dr. Owen wrote several tracts, which tended to enlighten the public mind, and to soften the hearts of adversaries. 'An Account of the Grounds and Reasons on which the Protestant Dissenters desire their liberty.'[o]—'A Letter concerning the present Excommunications.'[p]—'The present Distresses on Non-conformists examined.'[q] In 1667, he published 'Indulgence and Toleration Considered, in a Letter to a person of honour.' 4to. pp. 31.[r] And 'A Peace Offering, in an Apology and humble plea for Indulgence and Liberty of Conscience.' 4to. pp. 37.[s] The general design of all these tracts is, to promote peaceable obedience to the civil enactments of Government;—to shew the injustice and impolicy of subjecting conscientious and useful men to suffering on account of their religious sentiments;—to expose the unconstitutional nature of the proceedings against them, by informers and secret emissaries;—to give a view of the nature and benefits of toleration, in former ages, and other places;—to vindicate it from various charges, and to point out the folly of attempting to settle the peace of the country on the basis of religious uniformity. They contain some of those enlightened principles and reasonings on the subject of religious liberty, which are to be found in his former writings; and notice what the event has proved to be true, that there is no nation where religious liberty would be more conducive to tranquillity, trade, and wealth, than England. All the tracts were anonymous, for very obvious reasons.

About this time he appears to have been preaching pretty regularly to a congregation of his own forming; consisting, among other persons, of many officers of the

[o] Vol. xxi. p. 467. [p] Vol. xxi. p. 481. [q] Vol. xxi. p. 473.
[r] Vol. xxi. p. 373. [s] Vol. xxi. p. 403.

army, with whom he had formerly been connected. He also set up a lecture, to which many persons of quality, and eminent citizens, resorted; of several of whom some account will afterwards be given. Any ease which was enjoyed, however, was but of a very temporary nature. No legal protection had been obtained, and the most valuable rights and privileges of the community were at the mercy of interested informers, and ignorant and intolerant magistrates. The Doctor himself made a very narrow escape from being apprehended, when on a visit to his old friends in the neighbourhood of Oxford. He endeavoured to keep as private as possible; but he was observed, and information given of the house in which he lodged. Some troopers came, and knocked at the door for admittance. On the landlady opening it, and demanding what they wanted, they told her they sought Dr. Owen. She, supposing he had gone off early in the morning, as he had intended, told them he was not there. On which, instead of examining the house, they rode off. The Doctor, on learning what had taken place, immediately got his horse, and returned to London.[t] How dreadful must have been the state of the country, when such a man was under the necessity of sculking and removing from place to place for security!

In 1667, he published 'A Brief Instruction in the Worship of God, and Discipline of the Churches of the New Testament, by way of Question and Answer.' 12mo. pp. 228.[u] It has neither his name, nor that of the printer, nor the place of printing,—evidences of the danger of being known as the author or publisher of a work on such a subject at that time. The style, however, betrays the writer in every page. It contains only fifty-three questions, the answers to which, with their explications, are of course abundantly long, and are frequently divided into several sections. His sentiments as an Independent, as might be expected, are plainly stated; but more in the way of practical explanation, than of controversy or theoretical defence. It contains altogether a very excellent view of the constitution, officers, and ordinances of a Christian church.

The publication of this Catechism, Baxter tells us, 'was

[t] Memoirs, p. 25. [u] Works, vol. xix. p. 463.

offensive to many.' Among the rest it gave great offence to Benjamin Camfield, Rector of Whitby in Derbyshire; who published an octavo volume of 347 pages, in reply to it. 'A serious examination of the Independents' Catechism, and therein of the chief principles of Non-conformity to, and separation from, the Church of England.' 1669. By this gentleman's account, 'the book examined is the sink of all Non-conforming and separating principles, from the Protestant religion established in the kingdom!' He is, throughout, exceedingly angry with the Catechist, whom he declares he neither knows, nor cares to know; and labours hard to convict him of error and inconsistency in maintaining the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures! But the body of the Doctor's work remains untouched.

The publication of the Catechism led Mr. Baxter to propose to Dr. Owen a union between the Presbyterians and the Independents. That excellent man was for ever contriving schemes of union, but very seldom employed the means which were most likely to accomplish them. He seems invariably to have forgot that union will never be effected by disputing for it; and that chiding, which he called plain dealing, was very unlikely to bring it about. His present attempt was not more successful than many others. 'I told Dr. Owen,' he says, 'that I must deal freely with him, that when I thought of what he had done formerly, I was much afraid, lest one who had been so great a breaker, would not be made an instrument in healing.' This was no great encouragement, certainly. 'But in other respects, I thought him the fittest person in England for the work; partly because he could understand it, and partly because his experience of the humours of men, and of the mischiefs of dividing principles and practices had been so very great, that if experience should make any man wise and fit for a healing work, it should be him.' This must have been vastly flattering to the Doctor. 'And that a Catechism for Independency, which he had lately written, was my chief motive, because he had there given up two of the worst principles of popularity'—acknowledging—'that the people have not the power of the Keys, and that they give not this power to the pastor.' He does not inform us that Owen admitted he had given up any

thing, or retracted any sentiment, for which he had formerly contended. Nor had he in fact done so. Owen maintains, in the Catechism, 'That whatever the Pastors do in the Church according to rule, they do it not in the name or by authority of the church by which their power is derived to them, nor as members only of the church by their own consent; but in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, from whom by virtue of his law and ordinance, their ministerial office or power is received.' This is a sentiment, which I believe Owen held from the beginning to the end of his career. Stripped of the superfluous language in which his ideas are all clothed, it amounts merely to what, I apprehend, all Independents hold: that the Pastor of a church, in leading it to obey the laws of Christ, acts not from a power communicated by the church; but in virtue of a special appointment of Christ, whose authority is interposed.

Mr. Baxter soon drew up 'abundance of theses, as the matter of common concord,' and left them with Owen, who objected to their number. On this he produced another draught of the things in which Presbyterians and Independents were agreed, to which he requested the Doctor's exceptions. Owen wrote him at some length, pointing out several things, which would require reconsideration, and at the same time expressing his cordial approbation of the object, and of the general plan proposed. This produced a long letter from Baxter, in reply to his doubts and exceptions. He still insinuates suspicions of Owen's sincerity, which must have rendered the correspondence very unpleasant to him; which, with the difficulty of accomplishing the object, together with doubts perhaps of the good likely to result from the attainment of it, as circumstances then stood, seem to have discouraged the Doctor. After more than a year's delay, Baxter says, Owen returned the papers with these words, 'I am still a well-wisher to these mathematics.' A reply sufficiently laconic—expressive of his general approbation of the scheme; but of his doubts about the calculating process of his ingenious correspondent. 'This was the issue,' says Baxter, 'of my third attempt for union with the Independents.'[x]

[x] Baxter's own Life, part iii. pp. 61—69.

Mr. Baxter's first attempt at union with the Independents, seems to have been made with Philip Nye, about 1655. Of the correspondence between them we have a full account in his Life.[y] The second, I suppose, was made with George Griffiths, some time after the former.[z] Neither of those individuals could enter into Baxter's proposals. It would be very unfair, however, to attach the blame of being hostile to union, to Owen, or Nye, or Griffiths, or the Independents at large; because they could not go into these measures. Mr. Baxter's schemes often looked fair and plausible on paper; but their practicability in the present state of human nature is a very different thing. The Independents were the smaller body, and were naturally afraid of being borne down by numbers, if they formed a union, by conceding any of their leading principles. To external uniformity they attached less importance than Baxter and most of his brethren did: and, whatever evils occasionally result from disunion—a scheme which would comprehend in one body Episcopalians and Baptists, Presbyterians and Independents, is likely to cure them only by inflicting a greater evil in their place. The sentiments of the Independents on the subject of union, expressed in the two last articles of the Savoy Declaration, embrace every thing for which it is of importance to contend; and I believe they are the sentiments held and acted on by the body to this day. 'Such reforming Churches as consist of persons sound in the faith, and of conversation becoming the Gospel, ought not to refuse the communion of each other, so far as may consist with their own principles respectively, though they walk not in all things according to the same rules of church order. Churches gathered, and walking according to the mind of Christ, judging other churches, though less pure, to be true churches, may receive into occasional communion with them, such members of those churches as are credibly testified to be godly, and to live without offence.'

What these eminent persons could not effect by disputation, was accomplished shortly after their death, in 1696; when the Presbyterian and Independent churches in London and the environs, united on certain general principles.[a]

[y] Part ii. pp. 188—192. [z] Ibid. part ii. p. 193. [a] See Heads of Agreement.

This illustrates the justness of a remark by Owen, in a Sermon preached on the occasion of two Churches uniting. 'I should be very sorry, that any man living should outgo me in desires that all who fear God throughout the world, especially in these nations, were of one way as well as of one heart. I know I desire it sincerely; but I do verily believe, that when God shall accomplish it, it will be the *effect* of love, not the *cause* of love. It will proceed from love, before it brings forth love. There is not a greater vanity in the world, than to drive men into a particular profession, and then suppose that love will be the necessary consequence of it; to think that if by sharp rebukes, by cutting bitter expressions, they can but drive men, into such and such practices, that then love will certainly ensue.' It is very probable that this language alludes to the failure of the attempt between Baxter and himself, and seems to explain the true cause of it. Baxter also refers to these failures in his Cure of Church Divisions, published in 1670; in which he fights the Established Church with the one hand, and the Independents with the other. He confesses that for twenty years he had been writing, preaching, and praying for the Churches' peace, but to no purpose. 'I have but made a wedge of my bare hand,' he says, 'by putting it into the cleft, and both sides closing upon it to my pain. I have turned both parties, which I endeavoured to part in the fray, against myself. When each side had but one adversary, I had two.'[t] Bagshaw replied to the 'Cure;' and Dr. Owen, Baxter says, 'spoke very bitterly against it in private, and divulged his dissent from my proposals of concord, though he never said more to myself than is before expressed.'[u] Baxter, though a most devoted servant of Christ, put too much keenness of temper into all his peaceable proposals, and this, no doubt, was one of the main reasons of their frequent failure. In promoting love, while he always acted from pure and upright motives, he did not sufficiently study the principal means of accomplishing it:

'Ut ameris amabilis esto.'

In 1668, by the death of his cousin Martyn Owen, a rich Brewer in London, the Doctor succeeded to a legacy of

[t] Cure, p. 144. [u] Baxter's own Life, part iii. p. 73.

five hundred pounds;[x] which, together with his landed property, and the proceeds of his numerous writings, enabled him to live, while enjoying probably little emolument from his labours in the Gospel. As these must have been very irregular, and frequently interrupted, more time was left him for private application, which he appears to have employed with the most conscientious diligence. Some of his most important publications, which had been long in preparation, made their appearance during this year, and to an account of them the remainder of this Chapter shall be devoted.

The first of these, is on 'The nature, power, deceit, and prevalency of the remainders of Indwelling-sin in believers,' &c. 8vo.[y] This work is the substance, as most of his practical writings were, of a series of Sermons: the text is Rom. vii. 21. It assumes the hereditary and universal nature of human depravity, and confines itself entirely to the experience, which believers have of the conflict between sin and grace, to which they are perpetually subject. It discovers a deep acquaintance with the malignity of sin, and the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart. It is closely connected in its nature with his treatise on Mortification, to which he refers the reader, and of which we have already given some account. There are many fine and important passages in the work, an attention to which on the part of believers would lead to much self-examination, watchfulness, and humility. The remains of inbred corruption sufficiently account for the little progress, which is too generally made in the Christian profession; for the fearful misconduct and falls to which men who have named the name of Christ are frequently left; for the want of that solid peace and enjoyment of which believers often complain; and for that conformity to the world in its pleasures and vanities which distinguish many, who would be offended if their Christian character were called in question. These things were matter of complaint and lamentation in the days of Owen, and are no less so now. It is true, we have a larger portion of public zeal, and of bustling activity in promoting the interests of religion. This is well; what ought to be encouraged—and what must be matter of

[x] Peck's Desiderata, vol. ii. p. 457. [y] Works, vol. xiii. p. 1.

thankfulness to every sincere Christian. But the deceitfulness of sin may operate as effectually, though less obviously in many, whose 'zeal for the Lord of Hosts' may appear very prominent, as in times when such exertions were not made. It is much easier to subscribe money to religious societies, to make speeches at public meetings, to unite in plans of associated usefulness, than to sit in judgment over the heart, or to correct the aberrations of conduct, spirit, and disposition. There may be much public professional warmth, and great inward, private decay. There may, in short, be a merging of individual, secret religion, in the bustle and crowd of general profession and public life. These things are suggested, not for the purpose of discouraging public exertion and association for the diffusion of truth; but for the purpose of leading men to consider, that in our circumstances genuine Christianity is not necessary to do many things, which are now the objects of general approbation; and that such things, however excellent in themselves, are but poor substitutes for a life of holy obedience, and converse with ourselves and with heaven. Such as engage in these objects would do well to read Owen on Indwelling-sin.

This same year he published 'A Practical Exposition on the cxxxth Psalm, in which the nature of the forgiveness of sin is declared, the truth and reality of it asserted, and the case of a soul distressed with the guilt of sin, and relieved by a discovery of forgiveness with God, is at large discoursed.' 4to.[z] To the exposition of this Psalm, the Doctor was probably led, by the important benefit which he had derived from the fourth verse of it, at an early period of his ministry. 'I myself preached Christ,' said he, 'some years, when I had but very little if any experimental acquaintance with access to God through Christ; until the Lord was pleased to visit me with sore affliction, whereby I was brought to the mouth of the grave, and under which my soul was oppressed with horror and darkness: but God graciously relieved my spirit, by a powerful application of Psalm cxxx. 4. 'But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.' From whence I received special instruction, peace, and comfort, in drawing near to God,

[z] Works, xiv. p. 1.

through the Mediator; and preached thereupon immediately after my recovery.'[a] This work partakes largely both of the faults and the excellences of its author. It partakes of his prolixity, verbosity, and diffusion; but it possesses also a large share of his knowledge of God and of man, and of the Divine ways of working with sinful creatures. Considering the topics which it embraces, it might have been one of the most valuable and useful of his writings—had he limited himself to a short illustration of the great leading points. But his disposition to weave an entire system into every work, extends his reasonings and illustrations so much, that the minds of most of his readers become fatigued and perplexed long before they arrive at the conclusion. The prevailing disposition of the present age is to reduce every thing to *Tracts*. This mode of treating Divine subjects suits the superficiality and indolence of writers, and the trifling habits of readers; while in other respects it is attended with very considerable advantages. In the age of Owen, the opposite tendency prevailed; the writers of that period seldom knew when to stop. They never supposed they could exhaust a subject. They were dissatisfied till they had produced a folio or a quarto, and had said every thing that could be said on the point in hand. This did not require all the labour and genius that some may suppose. In fact, the bulk of the work was often a *saving* of labour to them. They never thought of dressing or revising their thoughts. A whole chapter might often have been condensed into a paragraph, and have retained all its sentiment and a greater portion of spirit. Without meaning to detract from the merits of Dr. Owen, I am convinced that it would have been much more difficult for him to abridge than to expand; and that he would have been more exhausted by the attempt to reconsider and condense his

[a] This declaration the Doctor made to Mr. Davis of Rowel, in consequence of Mr. Davis consulting him respecting his own experience. Mr. Davis after this became a member of the church in London under Mr. T. Cole, from which he received a very honourable dismission, when invited to the pastoral office in the church of Rowel in Northamptonshire. While here some very singular things occurred in the church, which occasioned many evil reports and much misrepresentation. They produced an injudicious interference of the united ministers of London, and are not correctly stated by Calamy in the Non-conformist's Memorial. A vindication of Mr. Davis, with a particular account of these occurrences, was published by Mathias Maurice in an interesting pamphlet—'Monuments of mercy to the Congregational Church at Rowel,' 1729.

reasonings, and to polish his style, than by the first production of any of his works.

While a judicious Christian, who has much leisure and some taste for Theological reading, will derive benefit from such a treatise as this on the 130th Psalm, there are some evils which the very extent of it, as well as the mode of treating the subject are calculated to produce on others, which it may be of importance to notice. As the points which it discusses, embrace the leading subjects of salvation, an inquirer may be impressed with the feeling that they must be involved in great obscurity when they require so extended an explanation;—he may be led to doubt whether he will ever arrive at a satisfactory knowledge of them. This is a very hurtful mistake, which too many of the older works of Divinity have tended in no small degree to promote. They are unfavourable to those clear and simple views of salvation, which the Bible itself contains, and which it ought to be the great object of writing and preaching to point out.

A work which describes a minute and extensive process of God's manner of dealing with a sinner, or of keeping a believer in the truth, is likely to operate injuriously both upon sinners and upon believers. On the former, it is in danger of producing the belief that conversion is a work, which the sinner has to effect, either in the way of beginning it, or of carrying it on. The author may perhaps guard against this abuse of his performance. But while he describes a lengthened train of fears that must be experienced—of convictions that must be felt—of difficulties that must be subdued—of means that must be used—of duties that must be performed—there are a thousand chances, that a partially enlightened mind will suppose that all these must be gone through in order to its finding repose; and will be ready, either to sink into despair from their magnitude, or take comfort from brooding over its own feelings and duties, instead of looking for enjoyment to an Almighty Saviour, and a finished redemption. Such an individual, and even one who has obtained peace through faith in the blood of Christ, will be in danger of being exceedingly discouraged at not finding in himself all those feelings or marks which are attributed to the children of God; and if his experience does not correspond with the description, he may be ready to

conclude that something must be materially wrong. A person of cultivated talents who has been in the habit of paying close attention to the workings of his own mind, may describe at great length and with much accuracy all his own feelings—and what may perhaps be tolerably suited to individuals of the same description, placed in similar circumstances;—but what, if made the rule for determining God's method of dealing with others, would be found far from just or generally applicable.

We have no doubt that such books as Doddridge's Rise and Progress, Alleine's Alarm, Baxter's Call, and Owen's 130th Psalm have been eminently useful to many. They have roused attention, and produced conviction in multitudes. But we put it to any enlightened Christian, whether the attempt to follow out all the directions in these books, and the application of all the principles they record to the characters and experience of men in general, would not be attended with most injurious consequences. God's methods of 'convincing of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment' are exceedingly diversified. There is a disposition in men to make their personal and individual experience the rule and the test of that of others. The revelation of mercy is beautifully simple and plain;—yet the process by which we may have arrived at the understanding of it may have been very circuitous and complicated. Should we, instead of directing the attention of others to the revelation itself, in the full blaze of its splendour, and the unadorned simplicity of its statements, invite them to follow the windings of our path while tracing it out, and the harassing perplexities of our minds while seeking for rest, there can be little doubt that thus we should injure rather than benefit them.

We can make great allowance for enlargement on doctrinal or exegetical theology; but conciseness is of vast importance in an experimental or practical treatise, such as that on the 130th Psalm. To offer any analysis of a book which scarcely admits of it, and which is so generally known, would be rendering no service to the reader. Those who exercise the patience which a careful perusal of it requires, and whose 'senses are exercised to discern between good and evil,' will be rewarded with profit. In all the language

which occurs in it, it would be wrong for us to profess, what we do not feel, entire acquiescence. At the same time, our difference is not so much with the substance of the sentiments, as with the mode of communicating them, and with some of the expressions employed. We cannot, for instance, see the propriety of the 'distinction between faith and spiritual sense,' for which the Doctor contends. Faith is opposed to sense, as it is opposed to sight and hearing. And it is only in opposition to them that the apostle says, 'We walk by faith, not by sight.' There can be no spiritual exercise or enjoyment but through the medium of faith. And the stronger faith is, the higher will our enjoyment of spiritual blessings rise. We question indeed whether the Doctor's views on the subject of faith are always consistent with themselves. He sometimes speaks very clearly about it, and at other times more mysteriously. This was probably occasioned by his propensity to enlarge and to refine, where in many cases a simpler adherence to the written record, and to the dictates of a common understanding, would have been at once a shorter and a more effectual method.

In this important and busy year also appeared, the first volume of his great and long projected work,—on the Epistle to the Hebrews. As this is the most valuable as well as the most extensive of all his writings, it merits as well as requires particular notice in this place. It is entitled, 'An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews,—wherein the original text is opened and cleared, ancient and modern translations are compared and examined—the design of the apostle, with his reasonings, arguments, and testimonies is unfolded,—the faith, customs, sacrifices, and other usages of the Judaical Church, are opened and declared,—the true sense of the text is vindicated from the wrestings of it by Socinians and others,—and lastly, practical observations are deduced and improved. With preliminary Exercitations:' folio. The second volume appeared in 1674, the third in 1680, and the last, which he left fit for the press, after his death, in 1684. For the sake of unity, and to prevent repetitions we shall consider the whole at present.*

[b] I use, for the sake of convenience, the Edition, by the Rev. George Wright, in 7 vols. 8vo. Edin. 1815. And which may now be considered as completing the collection of his Works in octavo.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is one of the most important and difficult portions of the New Covenant Scriptures. The subjects of it are of peculiar interest, and the manner in which they are treated by the inspired author, renders no ordinary degree of scriptural information and critical acumen necessary for its interpretation. It is devoted to the illustration, not of the elements or first principles of Christianity, but of its higher departments; what the apostle calls 'the perfection' of the Christian system. The proof which it adduces from the Old Testament, of the Supreme Divinity of the Son of God,—of his infinite superiority as a Prophet, and Lawgiver, to Moses,—and as a Priest to Aaron, and all his successors; the views which it affords of the mystical design of the ancient dispensation—and of the nature and services of the earthly Tabernacle;—its reasonings respecting the Sacrifice of Christ—his Mediation in heaven—and the superior privileges of New Testament believers, exhibit the depth of the apostle's knowledge in the mystery of Christ, are calculated to exercise the minds of the most intelligent Christians, and are eminently fitted to enlarge our conceptions of the grandeur of that heavenly economy, which was established by the blood of Jesus, and is perpetuated by his ministry in the sanctuary above. An intimate acquaintance with it, will do more to establish the faith, and to comfort the mind of an inquirer, than all that has been written on Divine truth since the days of the apostles.

It must be acknowledged, that the interpretation of this epistle is attended with difficulties of considerable magnitude. It abounds in peculiarities of style and sentiment; it treats of subjects which are little noticed in other parts of the New Testament; and it contains profound and singular views of many parts of the Old Testament, and of its services. There is also a peculiar closeness in the reasoning, which requires the most fixed attention in tracing it, to avoid mistakes. While these things have deterred many from attempting to explain it, they have operated as inducements to others to endeavour to unfold its beauties and unveil its obscurities: so that, though much of it has been misunderstood, few books of Scripture have had more labour bestowed on them by learned and ingenious men.

It employed the pens of a number of the ancient writers, and many of the foreign Divines, both Catholic and Reformed, had, previously to the time of Owen, bestowed much attention on it. In our own country too, it had not been neglected. In 1635, David Dickson, a Scots minister, and the author of several exegetical works, published at Aberdeen, a small volume of explanations of this epistle. William Jones, D. D. is the author of a commentary on it, along with one on the epistle to Philemon, and on the second and third epistles of John, which appeared in one volume folio, in 1636. Thomas Lushington, D. D. published in 1646, a folio commentary on the Hebrews. William Gouge, D. D. a learned Puritan, and a member of the Westminster Assembly, was the author of another which appeared in 1655. And in 1662, appeared another folio exposition of the epistle, from the pen of Mr. George Lawson.

All these elaborate, and some of them valuable works, were prior to the attempt of Owen, and were doubtless known to him. In his preface, he speaks of some of them as 'composed with good judgment, and to very good purpose.' Referring to the entire body of preceding commentators on the epistle, he says, 'Some I found had critically examined many of the words, phrases, and expressions of the writer; some compared his quotations with the places in the Old Testament from which they are taken. Some had endeavoured an analysis of the several discourses of the author, with the nature and force of the arguments insisted on by him. The labours of some were to apply the truths contained in the epistle to practice; others have collected the difficulties which they observed therein, and scanned them in a scholastical way, with objections and solutions after their manner. Others had an especial regard to the places, whose sense is controverted among the several parties at variance in the Christian religion; all in their way and manner endeavouring to give light to the intention of the Holy Ghost, either in particular passages, or in the whole epistle.'

While he was encouraged by the help to be derived from all these quarters, for the interpretation of the epistle, he was, on the other hand, discouraged from the attempt, for

a time, by the idea that after so much had been done, any farther labour was unnecessary. But after he had perused all the works he could obtain, 'I found,' he says, 'the excellency of the writing to be such; the depth of the mysteries contained in it to be so great; the compass of the truth asserted, unfolded, and explained, so extensive, and so diffused through the whole body of the Christian religion; the usefulness of the things contained in it, so important and indispensably necessary; that I was quickly satisfied that the wisdom, grace, and truth treasured in this sacred storehouse, are far from being exhausted by the endeavours of all that are gone before us. So far did these truths then, seem from being all perfectly brought to light by them; that I was assured there was left a sufficient ground, not only for renewed investigation after rich ore in this mine, for the present generation, but for all them that shall succeed, to the consummation of all things.'

To this important and interesting work, the Doctor brought no ordinary qualifications. To eminent piety was now added, a mind enriched with all the various stores of theological learning, matured by years and experience, and enlarged by the correctest and most extensive views of the whole scheme of Divine revelation. He possessed an understanding naturally acute, and sharpened by constant and extended intercourse with enlightened and cultivated society; a habit of application and perseverance of unspeakable importance to such an undertaking; and a *copia verborum* which supplied inexhaustible facility of conveying his sentiments on every subject. How well these advantages were employed, even a slight acquaintance with the work must shew.

The exercitations which accompany this work, and which make the first two volumes of Wright's 8vo. edition, are peculiarly valuable. They contain a vast treasure of solid learning and laborious research; and, independently of the Commentary, may be of much service to the elucidation of other parts of the Sacred record. They examine and establish the Canonical authority of the Epistle—They inquire into its writer, and shew him to have been Paul—They investigate the time when it was written—and shew it must have been shortly after Paul's deliverance from his

first imprisonment. They consider the language in which it was written, and prove it to have been Greek. The citations made from the Old Testament are the subject of particular attention—the oneness of the Church—the Jewish distribution of the Old Testament, with their oral law and tradition—the Messiah, and the promises of the Old Testament concerning him—his appearances under the former dispensation—the faith of the ancient Church respecting him—the evidence that he has long since come—the consideration and vindication of Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks—Jewish traditions about the Messiah—proofs that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah—Objections of Jews against Christianity—the state and ordinances of the Church, before, and during the time of the law—The law itself—its precepts, promises, and threatenings—The Tabernacle, the priesthood, and its sacrifices, are the subjects of extended and accurate illustration, through the first volume. The second volume is entirely occupied with the consideration of the Priesthood of Christ, and the day of sacred rest.—Respecting the former of these subjects, he remarks in his preface; 'It is wholly without the compass of my knowledge, if the reader can find any other work, in which the doctrine of the Priesthood of Christ hath been so handled in its proper order and method, as to its origin, causes, nature, and effects.'

Without professing to be entirely of Dr. Owen's views in every part of these prolix Dissertations; it must be admitted that it is but a small and comparatively unimportant part to which any Christian can object; and the richness and scriptural piety which run through the whole, render them peculiarly interesting. The subjects are in themselves highly delightful, and few human writings exist, in which they are so ably treated. They abound, particularly the first part of them, in Rabbinical learning. This was, perhaps, necessary, as they involve so minute a discussion of the Jewish controversy. But I am not aware that this branch of learning is of so much importance to the elucidation of Scripture, as was then supposed. Owen, if any man, was qualified to bring it to bear upon the New Testament; and yet I do not perceive that much information can be derived from his use of it. Let any

man examine the writings of Lightfoot, and Pococke, and Schoetgen, the great masters of Rabbinical lore, and he will perhaps be astonished at the little advantage that accrues to Biblical interpretation from their labours. Indeed, it is scarcely reasonable to expect any thing but disappointment from them. The ancient Jewish writers or critics, with the exception of the earlier Talmuds, are all lost; and the more modern Rabbins were a race of drivellers, whose writings contain the largest portion of trash and nonsense to be found in the world. A little acquaintance with them will gratify curiosity, and at times perhaps supply a hint or an argument; but to expect any thing like enlightened criticism, is about as reasonable as to look for it from children.

The Exposition itself may be considered in a three-fold light—as an explanation of a portion of Scripture—as a body of controversy—and as a practical application of Divine truth. As an explanation, or exegetical illustration of an important epistle—it is distinguished by the general accuracy of its interpretations, and the conscientious manner in which the author has endeavoured to trace out the meaning of the Divine writer. There are works of this nature, and on this very book, which discover a greater parade of learning, and in which the meaning of particular texts is more accurately defined.—Pierce and Hallet's work on the Hebrews contains more critical learning; and the work of the late Archibald M'Lean of Edinburgh frequently corrects the minor mistakes of Owen; but neither of them, as a whole, admits of comparison with his. The leaven of Arianism in the former, and the dryness of the latter, render them both less useful, and less interesting. The following passage of Owen's preface, deserves the attention of all his readers, and especially of all who attempt to expound the word of God. It gives an admirable view of his state of mind, and of the principles on which he proceeded in his interpretation.

'For the exposition of the epistle itself, I confess, as was said before, that I have had thoughts of it for many years, and have not been without regard to it in the whole course of my studies. But yet I must now say, that after all my searching and reading, prayer and assiduous medi-

tation have been my only resort, and by far the most useful means of light and assistance. By these have my thoughts been freed from many an entanglement into which the writings of others had cast me, or from which they could not deliver me. Careful I have been, as of my life and soul, to bring no prejudicate sense to the words, to impose no meaning of my own or other men's upon them, nor to be imposed on by the reasonings, pretences, or curiosities of any; but always went nakedly to the word itself, to learn humbly the mind of God in it, and to express it as he should enable me. To this end, I always considered in the first place the sense, meaning, and import of the words of the text—their original derivation, use in other authors, especially in the LXX. of the Old Testament, in the books of the New, and particularly the writings of the same author. Oft-times the words expressed out of the Hebrew, or the things alluded to among that people, I found to give much light to the words of the apostle. To the general rule of attending to the design and scope of the place, the subject treated of, mediums fixed on for arguments and methods of reasoning, I still kept in my eye the time and season of writing this epistle, the state and condition of those to whom it was written, their persuasions, prejudices, customs, light, and traditions; I kept, also, in my view, the covenant and worship of the church of old; the translation of covenant privileges and worship to the Gentiles upon a new account; the course of providential dispensations that the Jews were under; the near expiration of their church and state; the speedy approach of their utter abolition and destruction, with the temptations that befel them on all these various accounts; without which it is impossible for any one justly to follow the apostle, so as to keep close to his design, or fully to understand his meaning.' Such views, under the Divine blessing, and directed by the judicious perseverance of Owen, could not fail to be attended with the most important result—they embrace every thing that could be necessary, or useful, to the interpretation of Scripture.

The Exposition contains also a large portion of controversy, chiefly on two subjects, Judaism and Socinianism. It is obvious how the former came to occupy so much of

his attention; but the reason of his introducing the latter may require some explanation. Against the Scripture doctrine of the sacrifice, and priesthood of Christ, the Polish Socinians had directed all their strength and ingenuity. They endeavoured to make out that the language of Scripture, on that subject, was not to be understood literally, but metaphorically—of course, that there is no such thing as a real sacrifice, or priesthood, belonging to Christianity. As Owen considered these things to lie at the foundation of all Christian faith and hope; and that they constituted the grand subjects of the Epistle, he could not allow so fair an opportunity to escape, of vindicating from Socinian glosses, the important statements and doctrines of revelation. If his zeal, for what he believed to be truth, carried him sometimes rather far; and led him occasionally to find fault with sentiments, not very remote from truth, and to express himself strongly against them, because held by persons infected with heresy—it is only what we might expect from a mind so ardently attached to evangelical doctrine. Without adopting all Dr. Owen's sentiments, the Christian who wishes to be established in the truths controverted by Socinians, will find in this work such a body of evidence and argument in their support, as must remove every reasonable ground of scepticism and unbelief. We hesitate not to affirm, that the proper understanding of the Epistle to the Hebrews alone, is amply sufficient to put to flight all the sophistry and declamation of the adversaries of the Deity, sacrifice, and priesthood of Christ—from Faustus Socinus to Thomas Belsham. On the Jewish controversy, there is almost every thing that is of importance; and, in fact, it will be found that on a number of subjects, a satisfactory reply to a Jew is a sufficient answer also to a Socinian.

The practical tendency and application of the whole are not the least important features of the work. The eminent godliness, as well as the learning of the author appear conspicuous in every page. 'His reasonings always terminate in some holy result. After reading the criticisms of an accurate scholar, the arguments of a sound logician, and the illustrations of a fertile mind, we are furnished with directions for self-examination; or are sent

away to our closets with a warm exhortation to abound in prayer, if we hope to understand the mind of the Spirit.'[y] This is just as it ought to be. The theory of Christianity without the practice, is like a body without the spirit; the practice without the theory, is not a reasonable service. To treat the Bible like an ancient classic, is using an unholy freedom with its sacred contents; while an indifference to the precise meaning of the Holy Spirit, manifests ignorance of the important connexion that subsists between right sentiments and suitable practice in religion; as well as a want of regard to the authority of God speaking in his word.

Notwithstanding this threefold division of the work, and the intimate connexion of its several parts with each other, it is so constructed, that any of the departments may be read separately. 'The method of the whole,' says the author, 'is so disposed, that any one, by the sole guidance of his eye, may carry on his reading of any one part of the whole without interruption, or mixing any other discourses with it. Thus he may, in the first place, go over our consideration of the original text, with the examination of ancient and modern translations, and the grammatical construction and signification of the words, without diverting to any thing else that is discoursed on the text. In like manner, if any desire to peruse the exposition of the text and context, with the declaration and vindication of the meaning of the Holy Ghost in them, without the least intermixture of any practical discourses deduced from them, he may, under the same guidance, and with the same labour, confine himself to this from the beginning to the end of the work. And whereas the practical observations, with their improvement, do virtually contain in them the sense and exposition of the words, and give light to the intention of the apostle in his whole design, for aught I know some may be desirous to exercise themselves principally in those discourses; which they may do by following the series and distinct continuation of them from first to last.' Thus, the Critic, the Expositor, and the plain Christian, may all find something to their taste, and to exercise their minds.

To enlarge on the execution of the work, after what has

[y] Dr. Wright's Preface, pp. iii. iv.

been already said, and the high rank which it has long held among the standard books of exegetical theology, would be superfluous labour; more especially, as the improved edition of Dr. Wright has now brought it within reach of many, who otherwise must have judged of its merits entirely from report. It may not, however, be unnecessary to state, that it is the fruit of more than twenty years' labour of the industrious author. A period long and chequered—during which he complains of 'straits and exclusion from the use of books,' occasioning 'uncertainties, failings, and mistakes,' which he prays God 'the reader may never know by experience.' Without any exaggeration, we may apply to this undertaking, the elegant and pensive language of our great Lexicographer,—'The exposition of the Hebrews was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow.' Such was the importance which the author himself attached to it, that he said when it was finished—'Now my work is done, it is time for me to die.'[d]

On the Continent, the work has been long highly valued. Walch says of it, 'Egregium est opus hoc, locuples testis de auctoris singulari eruditione, atque industria, quam ad illud conficiendum adhibuit.' It was translated into Dutch and published in quarto, at Rotterdam, in 1733. Le Long also mentions the proposal of a Latin translation of it, at Amsterdam, in 1700; but whether it ever appeared I am unable to say.[e] The late Dr. Williams, of Rotherham, published an abridgment of it in 4 vols. 8vo. in the year 1790. This was rendering a service to the cause of sacred literature, when the folio edition was so scarce and so expensive. Some also may be disposed to read the abridgment rather than the extended original. While it merits the praise of fidelity, so far as I have observed, those who wish to ascertain the sentiments and to enter into the feelings of Dr. Owen, will find it necessary to consult the original work.

I am acquainted with no ancient or modern work of an expository nature, that will bear a fair comparison on the whole, with the Exposition of the Hebrews. Caryl on Job,

[d] Clarkson's Fun. Ser.

[e] Walch Bib. Selecta, iv. p. 733.

is fully equal to it in magnitude; but falls far short, in the interest which it excites, and the ability which it displays. Its author, though a learned and pious man was far from being equal to Owen; and the subject on which he chose to exercise his own patience, and that of his readers, cannot be considered so valuable to the church as that of his friend and successor. The celebrated work of Vitringa, on Isaiah, has deservedly obtained an equal reputation with that of Owen on the Hebrews. It contains a larger portion of critical learning, and displays no less of acuteness and talent; but it is still more systematic than Owen's work—often fanciful—and sometimes erroneous. It is, however, *instar omnium* on Isaiah. The work of Professor Lampe, on the Gospel of John, with its valuable dissertations, is somewhat similar to Owen's. Belonging to the same school, possessed of varied learning,—and of patient industry,—he is strictly orthodox, and exhausts almost every topic of importance in the Evangelist; but he does not always interest the mind sufficiently in his discussions, and is occasionally rather fond of mystical interpretations.

The chief objection to the Exposition of the Hebrews is its vast extent; four folio, or seven large 8vo. volumes on one epistle, and that not the longest in the New Testament, appear rather a cumbrous apparatus of explanation. —Much of the work, it must be acknowledged is not necessary to the interpretation of the apostle's language; yet in general the connexion between the text and the commentary is neither forced nor unnatural; and it is surprising how little occurs that we could wish had been omitted. It contains, indeed, like several other of the author's larger productions, a very entire and valuable system of Divinity, as there are few points of Divine truth on which the reader will not find important information. On this account, the index belonging to the octavo edition will be found of peculiar service. If the fame of Walton rests on the Polyglot, and that of Poole on the Synopsis,—the Exposition of the Hebrews, had its author written nothing else, forms a pedestal on which John Owen will appear an object of admiration to all future generations.

CHAP. XI.

Persecuting conduct of the Congregationalists in New England—Remonstrances of Owen and his brethren on the subject—Owen publishes on the Trinity—His controversy with Parker—His Truth and Innocence vindicated—Publications of others on the same side—Marvel and Parker—Conduct of Parliament to the Dissenters—Vernon's attack on Owen—Owen's defence—Alsop—Owen invited to the Presidency of Harvard College—Publishes on the Sabbath—Correspondence on this subject with Eliot—Charles publishes a Declaration of Indulgence—Address from the Dissenters on this account presented by Owen—Owen's attention to the measures of the Court—Becomes one of the preachers of the Morning Exercise—Publishes on Evangelical Love—Death of Caryl—Union of Caryl's and Owen's Churches under the Doctor—Notices of persons of distinction who were members of the Church—The Parliament offended with the King's Indulgence—Notices of distinguished Noblemen whose friendship Owen enjoyed—His interviews with the King and Duke of York—Work on Communion attacked by Sherlock—Owen's vindication—Controversy occasioned by Sherlock's book—Owen publishes on the Holy Spirit—Review of all his writings on that subject—Attacked by Clagett—Publishes on Apostasy—Marries his second wife.

For several years the New England Congregationalists had employed very oppressive measures to suppress the Baptists and Quakers. Their highly improper and Anti-christian conduct has often been alleged as evidence of the persecuting dispositions of Independents, as well as others, when possessed of power. That Independents may be persecutors, it would be foolish to deny; but that such conduct is inconsistent with the principles and the spirit of Independency, all who understand it must ever maintain. A little acquaintance with the proceedings in New England, against which Dr. Owen and his brethren protested, will satisfy us that Independency had very little to do with them.

The Brownists, who colonized New England, understood most thoroughly the principles of religious liberty. But they removed from Holland to America *as a church*, and little versant in the science of legislation and political economy, they formed state laws on the principles of the New Testament, and the discipline of the church of Christ. They did not perceive (at which we need scarcely be sur-

prised), the impossibility of managing a growing population, in a new country, by such means, without sacrificing the liberty of the subject, or the purity of the church. At first, the body of the people were Christians, and of one mind; and a considerable time elapsed before the erroneous principles on which their legislative code was founded made their appearance. It was still longer before they understood the proper remedy. The subsequent emigrations from Britain consisted of many persons of very different sentiments on various subjects, from the original settlers, though they fell into their general measures and views. Most of the Puritans who went over to New England were attached to a species of Presbyterianism, rather than to Independency; and from this arose the peculiar complexion which the churches, after a time, exhibited. They had their regular meetings of synods and councils, in which the civil magistrate occupied a place; and the laws or regulations of which were enforced by his authority. The term Independency, is obviously misapplied to such procedure, and it is unjust to make it accountable for the consequences.[a] It is not the name, but the spirit and conduct which discover the system to which we belong.[b]

So contrary to the word of God was their behaviour considered, that on hearing of it, a letter was written by the Independent ministers in London, at the head of whom was Dr. Owen, remonstrating with their brethren, and entreating them to desist from such proceedings. Without entering into the merits of the differences between them and the persons who were suffering, they urge a variety of suitable and important considerations to convince them of the necessity of altering their measures, and thus conclude:—'You have the advantage of truth and order; you have the gifts and learning of an able ministry to manage and defend them; you have the care and vigilance of a very worthy

[a] Consistent Independency is not accountable for any thing, but what is done by the Churches and their office bearers separately assembled. The proceedings of delegated bodies or representatives in conjunction with civil authority, are obviously at variance with its first principles.—It was by meetings of the latter description entirely that all the persecuting measures in New England were adopted. A full view of their injurious nature, as well as of the length of time during which they continued to operate, will be found in Backus's Church Hist. of New England, 2 vols. 1777—1784.

[b] Neal's New England, vol. i. passim.

magistracy to countenance and protect them, and to preserve the peace; and, above all, you have a blessed Lord and Master, who hath the keys of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, living for ever to take care of his own concernments among his saints. And assuredly you need not be disquieted, though some few persons, through their own infirmity and weakness, or through their ignorance, darkness, and prejudices, should, to their disadvantage, turn out of the way, in some lesser matters, into bye-paths of their own. We only make it our hearty request that you will trust God with his truth and ways, so far as to suspend all rigorous proceedings in corporal restraints or punishments on persons that dissent from you, and practise the principles of their dissent without danger or disturbance to the civil peace of the place.'[c] This letter, dated the 25th of March, 1669, Dr. Mather acknowledges, was not attended at the time with all the effects it ought to have produced; but at length, with other means, it contributed to give the New England churches better views. It shews, however, what were the sentiments of Dr. Owen and his brethren, respecting coercive measures, and exculpates them from all participation in conduct which cannot be too severely reprobated.

In 1669, Owen published 'A Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, as also, of the Person and Satisfaction of Christ.' 18mo. pp. 252.[d] It was occasioned, he tells us in the preface, 'by no particular provocation he had received, nor by any particular work in opposition to the doctrine contended for; but entirely by his desire to promote the edification and establishment of the plain Christian.' After what has been said on this subject in our account of the controversy with Biddle, and as we must again resume it, in noticing a larger subsequent performance, it is unnecessary now to enter on it particularly. It contains the same sentiments, stripped of their controversial dress, and illustrated simply from the Scriptures themselves. It has been frequently reprinted, and was also translated into the Dutch language.[e]

Next year he was engaged in a very angry contro-

[c] Magnalia Americana, book vii. p. 28.
[d] Works, vol. x. p. 449.
[e] Vitringa, Doct. Christ. pars vi. p. 6. Edit. 1776.

versy on the subject of Non-conformity. The High Church party was constantly increasing in its malignant hostility to the poor suffering Dissenters, and resorted to every mode of aggression which was likely to make them miserable. It was impossible, however, to ruin them entirely, till every principle of liberty was rooted out of the country. To consummate this execrable project, Samuel Parker, of whom we have before spoken, published 'A Discourse of Ecclesiastical Politie, wherein the authority of the Civil Magistrate over the Consciences of Subjects in matters of external religion, is asserted; the mischiefs and inconveniences of TOLERATION are represented, and all pretences pleaded in behalf of Liberty of Conscience are fully answered.' 8vo. pp. 326, 1670. In this vile production, the Non-conformists are grossly calumniated, and their sentiments represented as incompatible with the peace and security of government. The most extravagant powers in all things, civil and religious, are ascribed to the magistrate, and the blindest and most abject submission to his authority enjoined.

To meet this attack was imperiously necessary. Dr. Owen applied to Baxter to undertake the defence of Non-conformity. But he declined the task, considering himself as excepted from the reproaches which had been thrown out; and that if he were to answer Parker, they would soon make him as odious as the rest.[f] The Doctor, therefore, took him up, and acquitted himself with great credit in his 'Truth and Innocence Vindicated; in a Survey of a Discourse on Ecclesiastical Polity,' &c. 8vo. pp. 410, 1670.[g] The substance of Parker's work, Owen ludicrously represents as summed up in the following Royal decree:—

'Whereas we have an universal and absolute power over the consciences of all our subjects, in things appertaining to the worship of God; so that, if we please, we can introduce new duties never yet heard of, in the most important parts of religion; and may impose on them in the practice of religion and divine worship, what we please; so that in our judgment it doth not countenance vice, nor disgrace the Deity: and whereas this power is naturally inherent in us, not given or granted to us by Jesus Christ,

[f] Baxter's Life, part iii. p. 42. [g] Works, vol. xxi. p. 161.

but belonged to us or our predecessors before ever he was born; and this being such as that we ourselves, if we would, might exercise the special offices or duties of religion in our own person, especially that of the Priesthood, though we are pleased to transfer the exercise of it unto others; and whereas all our prescriptions, impositions, and injunctions, on these things, do immediately affect and bind the consciences of our subjects, because they are ours, whether they be right or wrong, true or false, we do enact and ordain as follows:—[Here insert, if you please, the author's scheme of religion, given in the second chapter.] That every man may, and do think and judge what he pleaseth concerning the things enjoined and enacted by us; for what have we to do with their thoughts and judgments; they are under the empire and dominion of conscience, which we cannot invade if we would. They may, if they please, judge them inconvenient, foolish, absurd, yea contrary to the mind, will, and law of God; our only intention, will, and pleasure is, to bind them to the constant observation and practice of them, and that under the penalties of hanging and damnation."[h]

Extravagant as this statute may appear, it is composed chiefly of Parker's own words and phrases, and in the sense too in which he used them. It is scarcely necessary to say that Owen's Vindication is a triumphant exposure of the folly and iniquity of such sentiments. Indeed they cannot bear examination; and the chief difficulty in replying to them is their intrinsic absurdity and madness. Yet such was the confidence or vanity of Parker, that he said, after the publication of his Polity, to the Earl of Anglesea, 'Let us see, my Lord, whether any of your chaplains can answer it.' Parker looked upwards for support, and cared not at what expense he wrote himself into a Bishoprick. The substance of his Polity was preached at *Lambeth;* and it was printed by the orders of *Sheldon*, a man of similar sentiments and spirit. The Doctor's work tended greatly to promote his celebrity among the Dissenters; and did great credit to his talents and spirit, as well as good to the cause. Besides, by 'Truth and Innocence Vindicated,' Parker was very roughly handled by several anonymous antagonists.

[h] Works, vol. xxi. pp. 220, 221.

'Insolence and Impudence triumphant: Envy and Fury enthroned: the Mirror of Malice and Madness, in a late Treatise entitled,' &c. 1670. 'Toleration Discussed in two Dialogues.' 1670. 'Animadversions on a new book, entitled Ecclesiastical Polity.' 1670. 'A Free Inquiry into the Causes of that very great esteem the Non-conformist ministers are in with their followers.' 1673. These are only some of the productions which appeared on the side of the Non-conformists.

Next year, Parker published 'A Defence and Continuation of the Ecclesiastical Polity,' against Dr. Owen; and in the following year, a still farther attack on him, in a preface which he wrote to a posthumous work of Bishop Bramhall. These works abounded in the lowest abuse of Owen. He calls him the 'Great Bell-weather of disturbance and sedition.'—'The viper,' he says, 'is so swelled with venom, that it must either burst or spit its poison.'—'The dunghill is his only magazine, and calumny his only weapon.' He openly avows, 'That if Dr. Owen had been treated as ill, or worse than is alleged, yet it can never be pretended that he was treated worse than he deserved: for he was a person of so pernicious a temper, of so much insolence, of such a restless implacable spirit, of such a sworn and inveterate hatred to the government of the church and state, that he ought without ceremony or fear of incivility, to have been pursued as the greatest pest and most dangerous enemy of the church and commonwealth; and whoever wishes well to his country, can never do it greater service than by beating down the interest and reputation of such sons of Belial.' This was speaking out with a vengeance, and to such shocking language silence was the only reply. Bramhall, to whose defence of himself and brethren against the charge of Popery, all this is prefixed, was the fast friend of Laud and the other *Ultras* of that period, and one of those ardent and secular spirits, who mainly assisted in stretching the bow of Ecclesiastical prerogative until it finally broke in their hands. Parker imitated his 'Patron Lord,' and produced the same glorious effect.

Although Owen appeared no more in this controversy, it by no means terminated here. The vain-glorious Clergy-

man was doomed to receive a scourging from the hands of a Layman, which must have made him writhe in every nerve. Charles and his court were passionately devoted to wit and raillery. They gloried in a Butler, whose burlesque poetry exposed the Puritans to contempt, and broke the edge of public censure against themselves. The other party, however, could boast a Marvel;—a wit and a poet too;—the most patriotic senator of his time, whose ironical muse often lashed the follies and the vices of the court. This accomplished writer took up the conceited clergyman, and in his 'Rehearsal Transprosed,' turned all the laughers against him, and from the king down to the tradesman, it was read with delight.[i] There are times and subjects which require the use of ridicule; and it will sometimes succeed, if judiciously managed, when graver argument fails.

——————— 'Ridiculum acri
Fortius, et melius magnas plerumque secat res.'

Parker and his party were now driven to the necessity of defence against this unexpected mode of repelling them. Victory was no longer thought of, if a decent retreat could only be effected. They assailed Marvel with all manner of weapons. In a twinkling appeared—'A Reproof to the Rehearsal Transprosed.'—'Rosemary and Bayes.'—'The Transproser Rehearsed.'—'Gregory Father Greybeard, with his vizor off.'—'A Common-place Book, out of the Rehearsal Transprosed.'—'Stoo him Bayes,' &c. &c. &c.

Marvel, undismayed by such a shower of missiles, returned to the charge; and in a second part of the Rehearsal, again overwhelmed his adversaries, and effectually silenced their battery. It was generally admitted that the odds and victory were on his side; and it had this effect on Parker, says Wood, that he judged it more prudent to lay down the cudgels than to enter the lists again with an untowardly combatant, so hugely well versed in the then but newly refined art of sporting and jeering buffoonery.[k] Although Parker retreated from any further attack, after the second part of the Rehearsal appeared, he only suppressed passions to which he was giving vent in secrecy and silence. That, indeed, was not discovered, till a posthumous work

[i] Burnet's own Times, vol. i. p. 382.

[k] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 619.

of his was published, in which one of the most striking parts is a disgusting caricature of his old antagonist. Marvel was indeed a republican, the pupil of Milton, and adored his master; but his morals and his manners were Roman,—he lived on the turnip of Curtius, and he would have bled at Philippi. We do not sympathize with the fierce spirit of those unhappy times, that scalped the head feebly protected by a mitre or a crown: but the private virtues and the rich genius of such a man are pure from the spirit of party.[k]

The Parliament which met in 1670, fell upon the Nonconformists more furiously than ever. They revived the Act against Conventicles, and made it severer than before. After it had passed the commons, Dr. Owen was requested to draw up some reasons against it, which were laid before the house of lords by several persons of distinction. He pointed out in plain and strong language its unjust and impolitic nature.[l] But it was all in vain; the bill passed the lords, the whole bench of Bishops voting for it, except Wilkins, Bishop of Chester, and Rainbow, Bishop of Carlisle. By this iniquitous Act, the persons who attended any other meetings for religious worship, than those of the Church of England, were made liable to heavy fines; the preacher to twenty pounds for the first offence, and forty for the second. To encourage informers, they were entitled to one-third; and it was provided that all the clauses in the Act should be construed most largely and beneficially for the suppressing of Conventicles, and for the justification and encouragement of all persons to be employed in the execution thereof.[m]

Neal justly remarks on this Act, that the wit of man could hardly invent any thing short of capital punishment more cruel and inhuman. Nothing less than the extermination of Dissenters seemed to be determined; and only he who restraineth the wrath of man could have prevented its having that effect. How men possessing the least particle of Christian principle or feeling could take part in such a measure is scarcely conceivable. Yet such is the blinding influence of power, and the deceitfulness of the

[k] D'Israeli's Quarrels of Authors, vol. ii. p. 204. [l] Works, vol. xxi. p. 457.
[m] Neal, vol. iv. p. 350. Edit. 1755.

heart, that professed Christians have supposed such enactments a service to the cause of God. These and similar deeds of oppression in support of Ecclesiastical establishments, by men connected with them, have powerfully tended to destroy their reputation, and to induce a conviction that the cause which requires such support cannot be the cause of God.

Attempts to ruin their fortunes, and injure their usefulness, were combined with the most cruel machinations to blacken their private character. So long as the Dissenting ministers stood high in public estimation, it was found impossible to accomplish, by state edicts, the destruction of their cause. In abuse and detraction, auxiliaries were sought to aid the common object. Parker, as we have already seen, was a leader in this species of disgraceful warfare. He was joined this year by an able and hearty coadjutor, to whose pages I have often been indebted—The Rev. George Vernon, a Glocestershire Rector, who had been educated in Oxford while Owen presided in the university.[n] He produced 'A Letter to a Friend, concerning some of Dr. Owen's principles and practices.' 4to. pp. 78. Owen is here described as 'the Prince, the Oracle, the Metropolitan of Independency.' He is denounced as 'the Ahitophel of Oliver Cromwell—a blasphemer and perjured person, and a libeller of authority after the restoration of Charles II.'—He is accused of having 'praised God for shedding the blood of Christian kings, and their loyal subjects—and of being guilty of reiterated perjuries against that God, whom he confidently affirmed to be the inspirer of all his prayers.' In fine, the state is invoked to take vengeance on a miscreant, whose crimes deserved the highest punishment the laws could inflict.

We are accustomed now to hear the name of John Owen pronounced only with respect; but these things shew, that he partook largely of the common treatment of all the disciples of Christ. His name was cast out as evil, and all manner of reproach poured upon him falsely for the Son of Man's sake. The verdict of posterity is often more favourable, and always more impartial, than that of the present generation. The memory of the just is blessed,

[n] Athen. Ox. Bliss. iv.—605.

while that of the wicked is left to rot. The violence of this attack was such, that the Doctor found it necessary to meet it in a short letter to Sir Thomas Overbury, from which we have frequently quoted.[o] Vernon had studied attentively the wicked maxim,

Calumniare audacter, aliquid haerebit,

and Owen had learned from Father Valerian the use of another phrase, '*mentiris impudentissime*,' which he very decidedly applies to his clerical opponent.

The situation of the poor Dissenters was truly pitiable. They were baited by all sorts of antagonists, from the royal mastiff, ready to devour, to the contemptible church cur who could only bark or snarl. Whatever line of conduct they pursued, they were sure to be abused. In the true spirit of Procrustes, their enemies were determined to stretch them, or lop them. 'They challenge us,' said Alsop, 'to a paper duel in the most provoking language, such as would set an edge on the most obtuse coward. If modesty, an ambition for peace, or love of retirement, tempt us to decline the combat, we are then posted up for cowardice; but if we awaken so much spirit as to take up the gauntlet, and return the mildest answer, then trusty R. gets it in the wind, and immediately summons his hamlets, raises the whole *posse ecclesiae*, and spiritual militia upon us, and strangles the helpless infant in the cradle. If it escape, and be written with becoming seriousness, they have one reply, "this is nothing but whining or raving!" If the style be brisk, they have one word ready to confute it, "this is drollery, burlesque, buffoonery." Against all which I see no other remedy, but silent complaints, or it may be this short rejoinder:—

Tolle Legem, et fiat disputatio.'[p]

The learned Charles Chauncey, President of Harvard College, having died in the month of February, 1671, it must have been about this time that Owen was invited to become his successor; unless on account of Mr. Chauncey's age, who was eighty-two at his death, he had been invited to the office during his life.[q] For such an office Dr. Owen

[o] Works, vol. xxi. p. 561. [p] Epist. ded. to Melius Inquirendum.

[q] 'It does *not* satisfactorily appear that he was invited to the Presidency of Harvard College.' Holmes' American Annals, vol. i. p. 321.

was peculiarly qualified. His learning, his talents, his experience, together with the knowledge he must have possessed of academical affairs, from his situation in Oxford, all pointed him out to his brethren in New England, as a most suitable person to fill the important trust. Harvard College was founded about 1630, and derived its name from John Harvard, a worthy minister, who left a considerable sum of money to lay the foundation of a fund for its support. Many persons in England contributed both money and books to the infant institution; among whom were Mr. Baxter, Sir Kenelm Digby, Sir John Maynard, Archbishop Usher, Mr. Joseph Hill, and the celebrated Theophilus Gale, who left the greater part of his valuable library to enrich it. The first President was Nathaniel Eaton, who was succeeded in 1640 by Henry Dunstar, who continued in office till he became Baptist in 1654. He was succeeded by Mr. Chauncey, who remained till his death. From this college many of the most valuable ministers in America have come forth, and it continues to enjoy considerable reputation.[r]

Though I have discovered no document ascertaining the fact of Owen's invitation to fill the Presidency: yet, as the Memoirs prefixed to his Sermons and Tracts assert it, as well as that he had an invitation of a similar nature from some of the Dutch universities, little doubt can be entertained of its truth. In the month of August, 1671, the Magistrates and Ministers of Massachusets Bay, addressed a letter to their brethren in England, imploring assistance for the support of Harvard College,—the supply of a President, and that young men might be sent over to be educated. A reply to this letter was written, and subscribed by Dr. Owen, and twelve of the London Independent Ministers. It is dated February 5th, 1672. They deplore their great inability to afford all the relief that was needed, but intimate that they were doing something for their assistance, which should afterwards be sent. They regret the difficulty of finding a President, and recommend Dr. Hoar,—a member of Mr. Collins' church, and who was then proceeding to New England. It is an exceedingly Christian and affectionate letter, and shews how cordially

[r] Magnalia Americana, book iv.

the churches on both sides the Atlantic were disposed to support and countenance each other. Dr. Hoar[s] was accordingly chosen President; but in consequence of some misunderstanding between him and the students, he resigned early in 1675, and died soon after. He had been originally educated in Harvard College himself, but came over to England in 1653, where he took his degree of M. D. and married a lady of rank of the name of Lisle.[t]

This year, the Doctor published his work on the Sabbath, which he had originally designed to form part of his Exercitations on the Epistle to the Hebrews; but for particular reasons he now sent it forth by itself.[u] His great object in it, is to establish the authority, and illustrate the duties and privileges of the day of sacred rest. The fanatics of the Commonwealth, among their other extravagances, had disputed its Divine obligation, contended that it was a part of the ceremonial law abrogated by Christ; and from maintaining that every day was alike holy, had proceeded to make every day alike profane. The publications and conversation of such persons had stumbled and shaken many; but they were not the chief causes of the relaxed observation of the Lord's day, which now prevailed. The spirit of the Book of Sports still influenced the British court; and Episcopal writers had done much to shake the faith of the country, in the privilege and sacred obligation of the Christian rest. The design and tendency of Peter Heylin's History of the Sabbath were to destroy its sanctification, and to root up the principles generally entertained by Christians on that subject. By the king and his ministers, all decent regard for the Sabbath was completely thrown off; their private conduct on that day, as appears from a note in a former part of this work, was execrably immoral; and when they attended the worship of God, it seemed to be their chief design to afford a public exhibition of the highest contempt of God, and sacred things. The effect of such example may easily be conceived. The serious observation of the first day of the week was a decided evidence of puritanism, which was held in more abomination

[s] Hutchinson's Col. of Original Papers, pp. 429—431.

[t] Mass. Coll. for 1799, p. 108.

[u] Having been inserted by Dr. Wright in its proper place in connexion with the work on the Hebrews, vol. ii. it has been omitted in the new edition of his works.

than the grossest debauchery. A general looseness of manners began to prevail, and the mighty torrent of iniquity threatened to sweep all sobriety and godliness from the land.

To counteract this growing, and very dangerous evil, was the duty of all who feared God, and desired to promote the interests of religion. The work on the Sabbath, was peculiarly calculated to repress iniquity, and establish truth. It abounds in learned and judicious reasonings: in which, in general, without quoting opponents, he demolishes effectually their sceptical doubts, or sophistical declamations. It discovers his mighty acquaintance with the Scriptures, and with all sacred and profane antiquity, as well as with the history of the church. He establishes, by incontrovertible evidence, the Divine appointment of the first day of the week, as the day of holy rest; and in his illustration of its nature, he is equally remote from the ceremonial rigidity of judaical worship, and the looseness of popish and prelatical allowance. He notices, on the one hand, the evil which 'consists in the accommodation of the laws, and precepts, and institutions of God, unto the lusts, and present courses and practices of men. A mystery of iniquity unto this purpose hath been discovered of late, tending to the utter debauching of the lives and consciences of men. A work exceedingly acceptable to all sorts of persons, who, if not given up to open atheism, would rejoice in nothing more, than in a reconciliation between the rule of their conscience, and their lusts, that they might sin freely and without remorse.' On the other hand, he acknowledges, that some 'have collected whatever they could think of that is good, pious, and useful in the practice of religion, and prescribed it all in a multitude of instances, as necessary to the sanctification of this day; so that a man can scarcely, in six days, read over all the duties that are proposed to be observed on the seventh. They have laboured more to multiply directions about external duties, giving them out, as it were, by number or tale, than to direct the mind to a due performance of the whole duty of the sanctification of the day, according to the spirit and genius of gospel obedience. And some measuring others by themselves, and their own abilities, have been apt to tie men up

to such long tiresome duties, and rigid abstinences, as have clogged their minds, and turned the whole service of the day into a wearisome bodily exercise that profiteth little.'[x]

These and some other expressions in this work, occasioned an unpleasant misunderstanding of his meaning, among several of his brethren, and brought upon the Doctor great distress and vexation. He had said, 'That the observation of the Lord's day is to be commensurate to the use of our natural strength, on any other day; from morning to night. The Lord's day is to be set apart to the ends of a holy rest unto God, by every one, according as his natural strength will enable him to employ himself in his lawful occasions any other day of the week.'[y] We should think there is nothing in this language very liable to exception, or capable of being misunderstood. That God does not require greater exertion in his service on the Sabbath, than we are capable of making in our own on other days, would seem to be the doctrine of common sense, as well as of the Scriptures. The sentiment, however, produced an expostulatory letter from Eliot, the apostle of the American Indians, to which the Doctor wrote a reply; which claims our attention, not only because it vindicates him from unfounded suspicion of being unfavourable to the moral obligation of the Lord's day; but also because it affords a fine specimen of the tenderness of his feelings, under the sufferings and unjust reproaches with which he had been frequently loaded.

'As to what concerns the *natural strength of man*, either I was under some mistake in my expression, or you seem to be so in your apprehension. I never thought, and I have not said, that the *continuance* of the Sabbath is to be commensurate to the natural strength of man, but only that it is an *allowable mean* of men's *continuance* in Sabbath duties; which, I suppose, you will not deny, lest you should cast the consciences of professors into inextricable difficulties. When first I engaged in that work, I intended not to have spoken one word about the *practical observation* of the day; but only to have endeavoured the *revival* of a truth, which, at present, is despised among *us*, and strenu-

[x] Vol. ii. of Wright's Ed. of Owen on the Hebrews, pp. 450—453.
[y] Ibid. p. 455.

ously opposed by sundry Divines of the United Provinces, who call the doctrine of the Sabbath, *Figmentum Anglicanum*. On the desire of some learned men in these parts, it was, that I undertook the vindication of it. Having now discharged the debt, which in this matter I owed to the truth, and to the church of God, though not as I ought, yet with such a composition, as, I hope, through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, might find acceptance with God, and with his saints, I suppose I shall not again engage on that subject.

'I suppose there is scarce any one alive in the world, who hath more reproaches cast upon him than I have; though hitherto God has been pleased, in some measure, to support my spirit under them. I still relieved myself by this, that my poor endeavours have found acceptance with the churches of Christ. But my holy, wise, and gracious Father sees it needful to try me in this matter also; and what I have received from you, which, it may be, contains not your sense alone, hath printed deeper, and left a greater impression on my mind, than all the virulent revilings, and false accusations I have met with, from my professed adversaries. I do acknowledge to you, that I have a dry and barren spirit, and I do heartily beg your prayers, that the Holy One would, notwithstanding all my sinful provocations, water me from above: but that I should now be apprehended to have given a wound to *holiness* in the churches, *is one of the saddest frowns in the cloudy brows of Divine Providence*. The doctrine of the Sabbath, I have asserted, though not as it ought, yet as well as I could; the observation of it in holy duties to the utmost of the strength for them, which God shall be pleased to give us, I have pleaded for; the necessity also of a serious preparation for it, in sundry previous duties, I have declared. But now to meet with severe expressions—it may be, 'tis the will of God, that vigour should hereby be given to my former discouragements, and that there is a call in it to cease from these kinds of labours.'[z]

While we sympathize with Owen in the sufferings which this letter describes, and admire the Christian feeling which it discovers, we are taught by it the impropriety of forming

[z] Mather's Magnalia, b. iii. p. 178.

rash judgments, and of condemning a writer for the supposed meaning of an insolated paragraph, to which his general character and sentiments are decidedly opposed. His language respecting his sufferings and reproaches, is fully justified by the statements we have given: and place him in a point of view in which he is now seldom contemplated —a companion with his brethren in the tribulation and patience of Jesus Christ. The splendour of an object frequently diminishes the nearer we approach to it. The glory with which a future generation sometimes encircles a devoted minister of heavenly benevolence, is, in many instances, more the effect of their distance from him, than of their just appreciation of his services. It is, at times, as dangerous to resist the expression of popular *eclat*, as it is at others to stem the swell of popular prejudice.[a]

In the beginning of the year 1672, Charles perceiving the bad effects of his severity against the Dissenters, or desirous of promoting the interests of Popery, issued a declaration of indulgence; in which he assumed the right of dispensing with the laws of Parliament in ecclesiastical matters. By his own authority, he suspended the execution of all the penal laws against Non-conformists and popish Recusants, and allowed them to meet for public worship, on taking out a licence to be granted for that purpose. Many of the Non-conformists scrupled about the lawfulness of availing themselves of the privilege thus granted, as it proceeded from the assumption of an illegal power, on the part of the crown. But as it only enabled them to enjoy that which they were naturally entitled to, and of which they could not be lawfully deprived; and as the enjoyment of this privilege was not an act of injustice to others, it seems a pity they should have perplexed themselves on this subject. They were all sufficiently aware that the grant was not made from any good will to them;

[a] The necessity of defending the sacred obligation of the day of rest, at this time, appears to have impressed others as well as Dr. Owen. Within a few months of each other, appeared, besides Owen's work—'Aphorisms concerning the doctrine of the Sabbath,' by the Rev. George Hughes of Plymouth, edited by his son, Obadiah Hughes.—'The Divine appointment of the Lord's day,' by Richard Baxter. Both these works are valuable, and support the same views which are maintained by Owen, though neither of them treats the subjects so fully, or so ably, as the Doctor. Baxter takes particular notice of the dangerous sentiments of Heylin, in his history of the Sabbath, and points out his perversions, both of Scripture testimony, and of Christian antiquity, to support his lax principles.

but it was their business to have accepted the boon, though bestowed with an ill grace, or from a bad design. 'We did, indeed,' says Owen, 'thankfully accept, and make use of this royal favour; and after that, for so many years, we had been exposed to all manner of sufferings and penalties, whereby multitudes were ruined in their estates, and some lost their lives, and that without hopes of any remission from the Parliament, by their mistake of the true interest of the kingdom, we were glad to take a little breathing from our troubles, under his Majesty's royal protection, designed only as an expedient, as was usual in former times, for the peace and security of the kingdom, until the whole matter might be settled in parliament.'[b]

When the Declaration of Indulgence was published, the Non-conformist ministers of London, were desirous of returning thanks to his Majesty; but found some difficulty in agreeing to the terms which they ought to employ. An address drawn up by Dr. Seaman and Mr. Jenkins was too eulogistic, and could not be agreed to. Baxter says, that when they could not come to an agreement about the form, they concluded on a cautious acknowledgment of the king's clemency, which was delivered extempore, having been introduced by Lord Arlington to the royal presence for this purpose.[c] This, however, is not strictly correct. An address was drawn up by Dr. Owen, agreed to by the ministers, and presented by him to his Majesty. I am happy to be able to present a copy of this document.

May it please your Majesty,

We humbly thank you for the favour of this opportunity, wherein we may acknowledge that deep sense which we have of your gracious clemency, the effects whereof we every day enjoy. It is that alone which has interposed between the severity of some laws, and some men's principles and us, which otherwise would have effected our ruin; though we are persuaded that neither the one nor the other, could countervail your Majesty's damage thereby.

It is this principally wherein the kings of the earth may render themselves like to the King of heaven, when by their

[b] Owen's Address to the Reader, prefixed to his Answer to Stillingfleet.
[c] Baxter's own Life, part iii. p. 99.

power, wisdom, and goodness, they relieve the minds of their peaceable subjects from fear, distress, and distracting anxieties, and trials on their persons (rendering their lives burdensome to themselves, and useless to others), which your Majesty has done towards multitudes of your subjects in this nation: And we do rejoice in this advantage, to declare to your Majesty, that as we have a conscientious respect to all those obligations to loyalty which lie on the commonalty of your subjects, so being capable of a *peculiar one* in the greatest of our concerns, the liberty of our consciences and assemblies, which others are not (as desiring no more, but what they esteem their right by law), we hold it our duty which we engage unto before you, not only to be partakers with them, but to preserve in our minds a peculiar readiness to serve on your Majesty's commands, and occasions, as we shall be required or advantaged for it. And we humbly pray the continuance of your gracious favour, and we shall pray that God would continue his presence with you in all your affairs, and continue your royal heart in these counsels and thoughts of *indulgence*, whose beginnings have restored quietness to neighbours, peace to counties, emptied prisons, and filled houses with industrious workers, and engaged the hands of multitudes unto the resolved and endeavoured readiness for your Majesty's service, as not knowing any thing in this world desirable to them, beyond what, under your government, and by your favour, they may enjoy.'[d]

From Owen's connexions it may easily be supposed that he knew more of what was passing at court, and in parliament, than most of his contemporaries in the ministry. It is curious to notice the account given by his adversaries of his anxiety to ascertain what was going on, and of the use which he made of his information. 'Witness his fishing out the king's counsels, and inquiring whether things went well as to his great Diana, liberty of conscience? How his Majesty stood affected to it? Whether he would connive at it, and the execution of the laws against it? Who were, or could be made his friends at

[d] Gentleman's Magazine, vol. xxxi. p. 253. It was sent by a Gentleman, who signs himself R. W. and who vouches for its authenticity, and thinks it never was published. I suppose this was the Rev. Richard Winter, a Dissenting Minister, in London, of high respectability.

court? What bills were like to be put up in parliament? How that assembly was united or divided? &c. And, according to the current and disposition of affairs, he did acquaint his *under officers,* and they, by their letters each post, were to inform their fraternity in each corner of the kingdom, how things were likely to go with them, how they should order their business, and either, for a time, omit or continue their conventicles.'[e] This account is, no doubt, exceedingly exaggerated; but if every word of it were true, it only does honour to the Doctor's vigilance, and disinterested anxiety to promote the welfare of his brethren. In such times, neutrality was criminal, and the man who did not employ every honourable means to avert the dangers which threatened the cause he had espoused, was guilty of betraying it.

The Indulgence, such as it was, promoted the comfort, and increase of the churches. The Independents and Presbyterians set up a public weekly lecture to testify their union on the most important subjects; and to resist the progress of Popery, Socinianism, and Infidelity. These lectures were delivered at Pinner's hall, on Tuesday mornings; and continued to be carried on jointly till 1695, when the two parties divided in consequence of the controversy about Crisp. The first lecturers were Doctors Owen, Manton, and Bates; and Messrs. Baxter, Jenkins, and Collins. Two of the discourses by Dr. Owen, were published in the Morning Exercises. The subject of the first is, 'How we may bring our hearts to bear reproofs?'[f] The second is on the question, 'How is the practical love of Truth the best preservative against Popery?' He entitles it, 'The Chambers of Imagery in the Church of Rome laid open; or an Antidote against Popery.'[g] The one was preached in 1674, the other in 1682. The last is a very long and very able discourse, in which he traces, to its true source, all the apostacy and abominations of the papacy, and of every false system of Christianity—the loss of the personal power and enjoyment of the truth, and the substitution of something external in their place. This affected their views of the object of worship, of its spiritual nature, of the character of the church of Christ, of its pro-

[e] Letter to a Friend, p. 34. [f] Works, vol. xvi. p. 23. [g] Ibid. p. 46.

per glory, and its divinely instituted discipline. The danger from Popery at any time arises chiefly from the prevalence of ignorance and vice, and from its adaptation to the strongest principles of human depravity. Let the Bible be loved and circulated, and genuine religion prosper in those who have been the subjects of Divine mercy, and no danger need be apprehended from Catholic emancipation, or any other constitutional right bestowed on any class of subjects.

In 1672, the Doctor published anonymously, 'A Discourse concerning Evangelical love, Church peace, and unity. With the occasions and reasons of present differences and divisions about things sacred and religious. Written in vindication of the principles and practice of some ministers and others.' 8vo. pp. 258.[h] This is a very excellent work, though less known, perhaps in consequence of its being without his name, than most of Owen's books. His views of love and unity are admirable; and are brought to bear on the controversy then warmly agitated by Baxter, and some others, respecting the Dissenters attending parish churches; to which Owen, for weighty reasons, was decidedly opposed. In the most dispassionate, and Scriptural manner, he states the corruptions and defects of national churches, and the reasons which, he conceived, justified his own separation, and that of his brethren, from them. The administration—the kind of connexion between the ministers and the people which obtains in them; the entire destruction of the original terms of communion,—viz. evidences of faith, and true conversion, and the substitution of other things in their place, by which the church becomes a mere worldly society, and all Christian love and unity are completely destroyed;—are the leading grounds on which he rests the necessity of Christians withdrawing from such institutions, and joining together in voluntary societies. It is only in churches constituted, as the apostolical churches evidently were, of spiritual persons, who have the unrestricted management of their own affairs, under the regulation of the laws of Christ, that all the benefits of Christian fellowship can be enjoyed, and all its duties properly discharged. It is strange, that

[h] Works, vol. xxi. p. 1.

men seeking to act simply as the primitive disciples did, should be charged with schism, and with introducing all manner of evil. That voluntary societies are of apostolical institution, and that national churches are a human device of a subsequent age, are matters of fact so palpably evident, that he who denies them scarcely deserves to be reasoned with. That many should choose to follow the former, rather than the latter, cannot be matter of surprise. And as it is now so publicly avowed by the advocates of establishments, that they are no part of Christianity, but only a wall for its protection, or the means of its propagation, it can still less be wondered at, that many should object to such an unauthorized appendage. The work of Owen is constructed on principles, the progress of which has been widely extended since his time, and which, as they are founded on the invincible basis of Scripture and of fact, must ultimately triumph over every secular ecclesiastical establishment upon earth. Those who contend for these principles, may appear to be the enemies of peace, and unity, and love; but in the end, they will be found to have been their truest friends. 'Speciosum quidem nomen est Pacis, et pulchra opinio unitatis; sed quis ambigat eam solam unicam Ecclesiae Pacem esse quae est?'[i]

Joseph Caryl died on the 7th of February, 1673. He had been pastor of a numerous Congregation, which he had collected soon after the Restoration, and which met for some years in Leadenhall-street.[k] 'His labours,' says a friend who knew him well, 'were great; his studies incessant; his conversation unspotted; his charity, faith, zeal, and wisdom, gave a fragrant smell among the churches and servants of Christ.—His sickness, though painful, was borne with patience and joy in believing; and so he parted from time to eternity under the full sail of desire and joy in the Holy Spirit. He lived his own Sermons. He at last desired his friends to forbear speaking to him, that so he might retire into himself; which time they perceived that he spent in prayer; oftentimes lifting up his hands a little; and at last, they, finding his hands not to move, drew near and perceived he was silently departed from them,

[i] Hilary, quoted by Owen on the title page.
[k] Wilson's Hist. of the Diss. Churches, vol. i. p. 252.

leaving many mourning hearts behind.'[l] Owen and Caryl had long been intimate; they had frequently been colleagued together in the time of the Commonwealth; their habits and sentiments were very similar; and as their churches assembled near each other,[m] they proposed uniting together under Dr. Owen, after the death of his esteemed friend and brother. As all parties seemed well affected to this proposition, the two churches met for the first time, for the joint worship of God, on the 5th of June, 1673; when Dr. Owen preached a very excellent and appropriate Sermon, from Colossians iii. 14.[n] He illustrates the nature and exercise of love, as the principal duty required among saints, especially as connected in church-fellowship. 'I declare,' he says with much solemnity, 'unto this congregation, this day, that unless this evangelical love be exerted, not loosely and generally, but among ourselves mutually toward each other, we shall never give up our account with joy to Jesus Christ; nor shall we ever carry on the great work of edification among ourselves. And if God be pleased but to give this spirit among you, I have nothing to fear but the mere weakness and depravity of my own heart and spirit.'

The united church consisted of more than one hundred and seventy persons. Of these only thirty-six were previously under the care of Dr. Owen; nearly one hundred and forty belonged to Mr. Caryl's church. The united body is reckoned a numerous society among Independents; but it was still more distinguished for the rank of some of its members, than for its number. Among those who were in it at the formation of the union, or who were afterwards received, were, Lord Charles Fleetwood; Sir John Hartopp; Colonel Desborough, brother-in-law to Oliver Cromwell; Col. Berry, a distinguished officer in the Commonwealth army; William Steele, Sergeant at Law; Dr. Staines; Col. Ellistone; Richard Lardner, the father of Dr. Lardner; Sir Thomas Overbury; and a number of the Shute family. Also Lady Abney; Lady Hartopp; Lady Vere Wilkinson; Lady Tompson; the Countess of Anglesea; and the celebrated Mrs. Bendish, grand-daughter

[l] Dorney's Div. Contemplations, p. 344.
[m] Wilson's Hist. of the Diss. Churches, vol. i. p. 253. [n] Works, vol. xvi. p. 465.

to Cromwell, and remarkably like the Protector in some of the strong features of his character.[o] Religion was not then so rare among persons of rank and family, as it has since become; and even the Non-conformists could reckon among their members not a few individuals in the higher walks of society, who counted it an honour to share their sufferings, as well as their privileges. The persons now mentioned continued to adorn the doctrine of Christ for many years, and in the oversight of them the Doctor remained till his death. A few gleanings of the history of some of them I shall introduce in this place.

Charles Fleetwood, son-in-law to Cromwell, descended from an ancient family, formerly in Lancashire. He held a post in the court of Charles I. but joined the Parliament, and soon rose to the highest honours which it could bestow. In 1647, he was one of the Commissioners appointed to treat with the King, with whose death afterwards he would have no concern. On the death of Ireton, he married his widow; after which he was made Commander-in-chief of the army in Ireland, which he entirely secured. He was created one of Oliver's Lords, and is therefore often called Lord Charles Fleetwood. He obtained favour after the Restoration, and lived privately for the most part at Stoke Newington, where he died on the 4th of October 1692. He suffered much for his principles as a dissenter, for at one time only, the fines imposed on him and Sir John Hartopp, who was married to one of his daughters, and a few others, amounted to £6000 or £7000.[p] To Fleetwood, Owen appears to have been strongly attached, as some of his letters to him shew.[q] He is accused, most unjustly, of cowardice; which was not a common vice in the leaders of the Commonwealth. Milton celebrates him as one 'of those who had most conspicuously signalized themselves in these times; and whom he had known from a boy to the blooming maturity of his military fame; to have been inferior to none in humanity, in gentleness, in benignity of disposition; whose intrepidity in the combat, and

[o] MS. copy of a list of the Members of the Church in my possession. I obtained it subsequently to the publication of the first edition of these Memoirs. It has enabled me to supply various dates, and to add a few names to those formerly mentioned.

[p] Noble's Mem. vol. ii. pp. 333—348. [q] See Appendix.

whose clemency in victory had been acknowledged even by the enemy.'[r] Granger says, he had no great skill as a soldier, and less as a politician; but he had a very powerful influence over the bigoted part of the army. He thought that prayers superseded the use of carnal weapons, and that it was sufficient to trust in the hand of Providence, without exerting the arm of flesh.[s] This, however, is the common style, in which the men of that period are reproached, for placing dependence on God for the success of their exertions. The measures which, in general, they employed sufficiently prove that they knew how to use means, as well as to exercise trust. Noble acknowledges that 'he was religious, and had the greatest veneration for civil liberty;' but, as if determined that what are virtues in ordinary men, should be deformities in Fleetwood, he adds —'his ideas of both were so romantic, fantastical, and erroneous, that they were blemishes instead of ornaments to his character.'

Major-General Berry (or Col. as he is designated in the church list) was originally a clerk in an iron-work, according to Baxter; a woodmonger in London, according to Noble. He was at an early period the bosom friend of Mr. Baxter, who highly esteemed him, and says, 'He was a man of great sincerity before the wars, and of very good natural parts, especially mathematical and mechanical. Affectionate in religion, and while conversant with humbling Providences, doctrines and company, a great enemy to pride. But when Cromwell made him his favourite, and his extraordinary valour was crowned with extraordinary success, his mind, his aim, his talk, and all was altered.' In a word, he became an Independent, by which he lost Baxter's good opinion; but it does not therefore follow that he deserved to lose it. He represented the counties of Hereford and Worcester in 1656, and was removed to Cromwell's upper house the following year. He was a leading instrument in pulling down Richard Cromwell, and an active member of the Council of State. Baxter admits, which is a strong testimony to his character, considering the opinion which we have just quoted;—'that he lived after,

[r] Milton's Prose Works. Ed. Symmons, vol. vi. p. 439.
[s] Biog. Hist. vol. iii. p. 18.

as honestly as could be expected in one that taketh error for truth, and evil to be good. He was for some time after the Restoration a prisoner in Scarborough Castle; but being released he became a gardener.' I know not how to reconcile this with the fact, that Parliament ordered him to retire from London to such of his seats as was at the greatest distance from the city. It is probable he lost much of his property, but not likely that he lost the whole. He died on the 9th of May 1691. His wife also was a member of the church previously to the union with Mr. Caryl's society; she died ten years before her husband, on the 9th of Dec. 1681. A Mr. John Berry appears to have been received into the Church in 1675; it is not improbable that he was a son of the Colonel. Miss Ann Berry, who was probably a daughter, was received into the Church in January 1677, and died in connexion with it in 1725.

Sir John Hartopp was distinguished both for his Christian character, and for the high respectability of his family. His grandfather was created a baronet by James I. in 1619, only a few years after the institution of the order. He was born in 1637, and at an early period of his life cast in his lot among the Independents. He married the daughter of Charles Fleetwood, Esq. and thus became allied to the Cromwell family. Lady Hartopp died Nov. 9, 1711. It was after her funeral that Dr. Watts preached and published 'The last enemy conquered.'[1] Sir John lived to the advanced age of eighty-five, and on his death, which took place April 1, 1722, Dr. Watts preached the most beautiful of all his discourses: 'The happiness of separate spirits made perfect.' As Sir John and Lady Hartopp were not only members of the church of which Dr. Watts was pastor, but as he had resided five years in their house, as tutor to their eldest son, the Doctor was peculiarly qualified for bearing testimony to the character of these estimable individuals. Of Lady Hartopp he says little, though what he does say is highly to her honour; but he gives a full length portrait of Sir John. 'The book of God was his chief study, and his divinest delight. His bible lay before him night and day, and he was well acquainted

[1] An excellent letter from Dr. Owen to Lady Hartopp, on the occasion of the death of an infant daughter, will be found in the Appendix.

with the writers who explained it best. He was desirous of seeing what the Spirit of God said to men in the original languages; for this end he commenced some acquaintance with the Hebrew, when he was more than fifty years old; and, that he might be capable of judging of any text in the New Testament, he kept his youthful knowledge of the Greek language in some measure to the period of his life. Among the various themes of Christian contemplation, he took peculiar pleasure in the doctrines of grace, in the display of the glories of the person of Christ, God in our nature, and the wondrous work of redemption by his cross. His conversation was pious and learned, ingenious and instructive. He was inquisitive into the affairs of the learned world, the progress of arts and sciences, the concerns of the nation, and the interests of the church of Christ, and upon all occasions was as ready to communicate as he was to inquire. His zeal for the welfare of his country and of the church in it, carried him out to the most extensive and toilsome services in his younger and middle age. He employed his time, his spirits, his interest, and his riches, for the defence of this poor nation, when it was in the utmost danger of popery and ruin. He was three times chosen representative in Parliament, for his county of Leicestershire, in those years when a sacred zeal for religion and liberty strove hard to bring in the bill of exclusion to prevent the Duke of York inheriting the crown of England. Nor was he ashamed to own and support the despised interest of the Dissenters, when the spirit of persecution raged highest in the days of Charles, and King James the Second. He was a present refuge for the oppressed, and the special Providence of God secured him and his friends from the fury of the oppressor. He enjoyed an intimate friendship with that great and venerable man, Dr. Owen, and this was mutually cultivated with zeal and delight on both sides, till death divided them. A long and familiar acquaintance enabled him also to furnish many memoirs, or matters of fact toward that brief account of the Doctor's life which was drawn up by another hand. Now, can we suppose two such souls to have been so happily intimate on earth, and may we not imagine they found each other among the brighter spirits on high? May we not indulge

ourselves to believe, that our late honoured friend hath been congratulated upon his arrival, by that holy man who assisted to direct and lead him thither?'[u]

Colonel John Desborough was descended from a respectable family, and was originally bred to the law. On the breaking out of the civil wars, he joined the army of the Parliament, in which, on account of his valour, he soon obtained a regiment of horse, and in 1648, rose to the rank of a Major-General. He was named one of the High Court of Justice for the trial of the King; but had the courage to refuse to sit. He married the sister of Oliver Cromwell, and was one of the Lords of his upper house; but notwithstanding this, he opposed the Protector's measures, and successfully resisted his attempt to assume the regal dignity. Milton celebrates him as one of the heroes of the Commonwealth, and as next to Lambert.[x] At the Restoration he attempted to leave the kingdom, but was arrested, and excepted from the act of indemnity, though not to forfeit his life. The administrations of Charles and James seem to have been very jealous of him, which is not to be wondered at, considering their conduct and his principles. It would appear, however, that he lived quietly and privately all the latter part of his life; and died on the 10th Sept. 1680.[y] Granger says, he was clumsy and ungainly in his person, clownish in his manners, and boisterous in his behaviour.[z]

Lady, or rather Mrs. Abney, as her husband was not knighted till after her death, was a daughter of Joseph Caryl, and a partaker of the piety of her father. Sir Thomas was descended from an honourable family at Wilsley, in the county of Derby. He was born in January 1639, and having lost his mother when young, he was sent to school at Loughborough, to be under the care of his aunt, Lady Bromley, whose instructions were conducive to those religious impressions which distinguished him through life.[a]

[u] Gibbon's Life of Watts, pp. 92—96. Watts' Death and Heaven.

[x] Milton's Prose Works, vol. vi. p. 439.

[y] Noble's Mem. vol. ii. pp. 243—250.

[z] Biog. Hist. vol. iii. p. 72.

[a] Lady Bromley, of Sheriff Hales in Shropshire, was many years famous for promoting, by her influence and practice, the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the genuine principles of the Reformation. She was the great patroness of the persecuted Non-conformists in that part of the country. Messrs. Ball, Nicholls, Pierson, Kerring, and others, when harassed and deprived of their ministry, were kindly

He became a member of the church in Silver-street, under the care of Dr. Jacomb, and afterwards of Mr. Howe. He was knighted by King William, and chosen Lord Mayor of London in 1700. As an evidence of his piety, on the evening of the day on which he entered on his office, he withdrew silently from the public assembly at Guildhall, after supper, went to his own house, there performed family worship, and then returned to the company. After the death of his first wife, he married in 1700, the daughter of John Gunston, Esq. Lady Abney was a member of the church in Bury-street; and while the name of Dr. Isaac Watts continues to be respected, those of Sir Thomas and Lady Abney, under whose roof he resided for thirty-six years, will be cherished with grateful affection. The account which the Rev. Jeremiah Smith, the pastor of the church when Sir Thomas died, gives of the family religion of this Non-conformist Knight, deserves to be quoted for the instruction of Christians in similar circumstances. 'Here were every day the morning and evening sacrifices of prayer and praise, and reading the Holy Scriptures. The Lord's day he strictly observed and sanctified. God was solemnly sought and worshipped, both before and after the family's attendance on public ordinances. The repetition of sermons, the reading of good books, the instruction of the household, and the singing of the Divine praises together, were much of the sacred employment of the holy day; variety and brevity making the whole not burdensome but pleasant; leaving at the same time room for the devotions of the closet, as well as for intervening works of necessity and mercy. Persons coming into such a family, with a serious tincture of mind, might well cry out, 'This is no other than the house of God, this is the gate of heaven!' Besides the ordinary and stated services of religion, occasional calls and seasons for worship were also much regarded. In signal family mercies and afflictions, in going journeys, in undertaking and accomplishing any matters of greater moment, God was especially owned by prayer and thanksgiving; the assistance of ministers being often called in on

entertained by this worthy lady. These divines often preached in her neighbourhood, whom she sheltered from the oppressive measures of the prelates as long as she was able; and when they durst not preach, they kept days of fasting and humiliation at her house. Brook's Lives, vol. ii. 441.

such occasions. Through the whole course of his life he was priest in his own family, except when a minister happened to be present."[b]

Lady Tompson, whose maiden name was Powell, was wife of John Tompson, Lord Haversham. This Nobleman belonged to a republican family, and was himself rather attached to that side in politics. He was made a baronet by Charles II., and was very active against the measures of Court during the two Popish reigns. He accordingly joined the Prince of Orange, by whom he was made a Baron, and Lord of the Admiralty. Towards the latter part of his life, he is said to have changed his principles, and gone over to the Church, though he continued sometimes to attend the Meeting. His Lordship moved in the House of Peers for the Princess Sophia's coming over, as a thing necessary for the preservation of the Protestant religion.[c] Mr. Howe's funeral sermon for Matthew Mead, who died in Oct. 1699, is dedicated to Lord and Lady Haversham. He speaks strongly of the value which they attached to Mr. Mead, and of the intimacy of their friendship. 'Your Lordship's great respect,' he says, 'to this servant of Christ, was even hereditary, and descended to him by you, from your family. And your Ladyship's great value of him, though it might take its first rise from so dear and judicious a relative, could not but receive a great increase from his known worth, and your own discerning judgment."[d] Dunton represents his Lordship as a man of penetration and deep knowledge in the affairs of Europe; as a patriot who asserted the rights of the Church of England, without punishing Dissenters; as possessed of all the tenderness of good nature, the softness of friendship, and a generous sense of the miseries of mankind.[e]

Mrs. Polhill, wife of Edward Polhill, Esq. of Burwash in Sussex, was also a member of the church. The Doctor addresses her in a beautiful letter which he wrote on the occasion of her daughter's death, not only as a sister, but as the object of special affection and care.[f] Her husband, though a friend of Owen, and of the Dissenters, was him-

[b] Gibbon's Life of Watts, p. 103. [c] Walpole's Works, vol. i. p. 429.
[d] Howe's Works, vol. ii. p. 461.
[e] The Life and Errors of John Dunton, p. 429. [f] See Appendix.

self in the Established Church. All that I know of him and his writings will be found in the Appendix.

Of Lady Vere Wilkinson, I know nothing. She was the wife of a Knight, I suppose, as I do not observe any title of this description in the Peerage or Baronetage of England. She died, Dec. 12, 1708.

Of Mrs. Bendish, very full and amusing accounts have been often given. Dr. Owen, it is said, was her favourite author; but her character was more marked by the peculiarities of her grandfather, than by the constant influence of Owen's principles. Dr. Watts addresses a poem against tears to her, and it is to be hoped she is now where all eccentricities for ever cease, and where all tears are for ever wiped away.

On other persons whose names have been mentioned, or who occur in the church book, I might have offered some remarks; but the above must suffice as illustrative of the high respectability of Owen's connexions, and of the state of Non-conformity at this period.

The parliament which met in 1673 were highly offended with the king's declaration of indulgence, and insisted on its being recalled. They began, however, to distinguish between Protestant and Popish dissenters, and were willing to shew more favour to the former than they had been accustomed to do. They passed the Test Act, by which dissenters were rendered incapable of holding places of power or trust under government; and the court soon after renewed its severities, by recalling the licences which had been granted to the Non-conformist ministers, and by issuing a declaration requiring the execution of the laws against Conventicles. By these unrighteous measures many were made to suffer most greviously, among the first of whom was Mr. Baxter, notwithstanding his rooted dislike to rigid dissent.[g] I do not find that Dr. Owen suffered personally, but he was far from being unconcerned about the sufferings of his brethren. He wrote a very spirited paper of 'Advice to the citizens of London,'[h] in which he expresses very strongly his opinion of the unparalleled severities inflicted on Protestant dissenters. His safety was very probably owing to the high respectability of some of his friends.

[g] Baxter's Life, part iii. pp. 153. 155.

[h] Works, vol. xxi. p. 445.

He enjoyed the favour and friendship of the Earls of Orrery and Anglesea, Lords Willoughby, Wharton, and Berkely, and of Sir John Trevor, one of the secretaries of state.[j] A short account of these noblemen, who were distinguished for their attentions to the Non-conformists, and some of them for their personal piety, will perhaps be acceptable to the reader.

Roger Boyle, fifth son of the great Earl of Cork, and brother of the celebrated Robert Boyle, was created Lord Broghill when only seven years of age, and under this title is well known from the conduct of Cromwell to him on several occasions. He was created Earl of Orrery by Charles II. soon after the Restoration, which he had zealously promoted. He was eminent for his attachment to the Protestant cause, and rose to the highest posts in the government of Ireland. He never made a bad figure but as an author. As a soldier, his bravery was distinguished, his stratagems remarkable. As a statesman, it is sufficient to say, that he had the confidence of Cromwell. As a man, he was grateful, and would have supported the son of his friend. Like Cicero and Richelieu, he would not be content without being a poet. Like Atticus, he prudently adapted himself to the changes of the times; but not by a timid and cautious conduct, or securing himself by inaction, much less by mean or sordid compliances.[k]

Arthur Annesley, son of Sir Francis Annesley, Lord Mount Norris, was born in Dublin, in 1614. While a young man, he was on the side of Charles I., but afterwards, he embraced that of the parliament, to which he rendered some important services. He was not trusted by Cromwell, but was made president of the council of state after the fall of Richard, in which capacity he was active for the Restoration. He enjoyed much of Charles II.'s favour, by whom he was made Earl of Anglesea, treasurer of the navy, commissioner for resettling Ireland, and Lord privy seal. He was a Calvinist in his religious sentiments, and, from his liberal conduct to men of different parties, left it doubtful whether he was a Conformist or Non-conformist in principle. The dissenters always considered him

[j] Memoirs, p. 29.
[k] Walpole's Works, vol. i. p. 514. Granger, vol. iii. p. 226.

as their friend, and as his Lordship and Dr. Samuel Annesley were cousins, and some of the Non-conformist ministers generally resided as chaplains in his house, he knew much about the dissenters, and interested himself greatly on their behalf. He left a valuable collection of books, which he had procured at great expense, and which, after the example of the De Puys and Colberts, he intended should never go out of his family; but it was sold after his death, which took place in 1686.[l] The Countess of Anglesea, who was a member of Dr. Owen's Church, was so much attached to Dr. Owen, that sometime before her death, she requested that the Doctor's widow would allow her to be buried in the same vault with him; that dying, as well as living, she might testify her regard to him.[m]

Lord Willoughby of Parham, distinguished himself greatly as an officer in the parliamentary army, at the beginning of the civil war. His father, Lord Lindsay, was killed at the battle of Edge-hill, and himself taken prisoner. He was made general of the horse under the Earl of Essex. But being disgusted by the Commons refusing a personal treaty with the king, he assisted the tumults in the city, by which the parliament was driven to the army, and for which he was afterwards impeached. Not choosing to stand a trial, he retired to Holland, where he was made Vice-Admiral of the fleet fitted out by Charles, then Prince of Wales. In 1650, he went out privately to Barbadoes, where he proclaimed Charles II. and assumed the office of governor. He defended the island for a time against Cromwell's fleet, but at last surrendered on condition of being permitted to return to England and enjoy his estate. He was sent out to be governor of Barbadoes by Charles in 1666, where he died.[n] The Parham family appear to have continued dissenters to a very late period. Henry, Lord Willoughby, who died in 1775, in the 79th year of his age, was buried in Bunhill-fields, the receptacle of the ashes of the dissenters for two hundred years.

Philip, Lord Wharton, was a Puritan nobleman of considerable note. He was one of the lay members of the

[l] Walpole's Works, vol. i. pp. 411, 412. Athen. Ox. Bliss. vol. iv. pp. 182. 187.
[m] Memoirs of Owen prefixed to the 8vo. Edit. of his Sermons, 1720.
[n] Whitelock's Mem. passim.

Westminster Assembly, and took a most active part in supporting the parliament against the King; for which services he was created an Earl by the House. He was appointed, with several others, resident commissioner at Edinburgh, to attend the Scots parliament. He was sent to the Tower for challenging the legality of the Long Parliament of Charles II. After this he travelled abroad, carrying Mr. Howe with him. He seems to have been a decided Non-conformist, and his house was a refuge for their ministers, in the time of persecution. While attending Dr. Manton's meeting at one time, the place was beset, and his name taken down. The place was fined forty pounds, and the minister twenty, which his Lordship paid. Mr. Locke describes him as 'an old and expert parliament man, of eminent piety and abilities, a great friend to the Protestant religion, and interest of England.'[o] In a postscript to a letter written from his house to the church in Bury-street, by Dr. Owen, when he was ill,—the Doctor thus expresses himself respecting the family:—'I humbly desire you would in your prayers remember the family where I am, from whom I have received, and do receive great Christian kindness. I may say, as the Apostle, of Onesiphorus, the Lord give to them, that they may find mercy of the Lord in that day, for they have often refreshed me in my great distress.'[p] The Countess of Wharton, also, appears to have been a very excellent woman; and from the language of Mr. Howe, in the dedication of his 'Thoughtfulness for the future,' she seems to have been a Non-conformist, if not a member of his church. He speaks of her Ladyship having been called to serve the Christian interest 'in a family wherein it had long flourished; and which it had dignified beyond all the splendour that antiquity and secular greatness could confer upon it.'[q]

George Berkely, created Earl of Berkely, in 1679, was a privy counsellor in the reigns of Charles II. James II. and William. He was also Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for several years. He bestowed a very valuable library, which had been collected by Sir Robert Cooke, on Sion College, for the use of the city clergy. If we may judge of his reli-

[o] Collection of Locke's Pieces, p. 116. [p] Appendix.
[q] Howe's Works, vol. ii. p. 102.

gion from a small work which he published in 1670, 'Historical Applications, and Occasional Meditations upon several subjects,' we must think very favourably of it. Alluding to this book, and its author, Waller exclaims

> 'Bold is the man who dares engage
> For piety in such an age.'

He was a nobleman of strict virtue and piety, and of such undistinguishing affability to men of all ranks and parties, as to occasion his being exhibited by Wycherly in his 'Plain Dealer,' as Lord Plausible.[r]

Sir John Trevor, was a branch of an ancient and noble family in Wales; and both he and his father were particularly respected by the Protectors, Oliver and Richard. He married Ruth, daughter of the celebrated Hampden, and possessed a portion of his patriotism. Charles either forgot his services to the republic, or was desirous of gaining the favour of a powerful family; for he not only knighted him, but sent him, in 1668, Ambassador to the Court of France; and after his return, raised him to his privy council, and made him one of his principal secretaries of state. His former connexions sufficiently explain his partiality for the Non-conformists. He died of a fever in 1672.[s]

Nor was it to several of the leading noblemen, or members of administration only, that Owen was known; both the King and the Duke of York paid him some attentions. Being in a very languishing state of health in 1674,[t] he was at Tunbridge Wells when the Duke of York was there. The Duke sent for him, and had several conversations with him in his tent, about the Dissenters and Conventicles. After his return to London, the King himself sent for him, and conversed two hours with him, assuring him of his favour and respect, and told him that he might have access to him whenever he pleased. Charles also made strong professions of regard for liberty of conscience, declared how sensible he was of the injuries that had been done to Dissenters, and as a proof of his good wishes to them, gave the Doctor a thousand guineas to distribute among those who had suffered most by the late severities. The Doctor thankfully received his Majesty's generosity, and faithfully

[r] Athen. Ox. Bliss, iv. p. 695. Granger, vol. iii. p. 212.
[s] Noble's Mem. vol. ii. pp. 138—143. [t] Hutchinson's Col. of Original Papers.

applied it to the objects of his bounty.[u] When this came to be known, a great clamour was raised by some Churchmen, who reported that Owen and the Dissenters were pensioned to serve the Popish interest. To this the Doctor afterwards replied with considerable warmth, 'That never any one person in authority, dignity or power, in this nation, nor any one that had any relation to public affairs, nor any of the Papists, or Protestants did ever speak one word to him or advise with him about any indulgence or toleration to be granted unto Papists, and challenges all the world to prove the contrary if they can. The persons are sufficiently known of whom they may make their inquiry.'[x] Notwithstanding this, Burnet asserts that Stillingfleet told him, the Court hired the Dissenters to be silent, and that the greater part of them were so, and were very compliant.[y]

This year, the Doctor sustained a very unexpected attack on his work on Communion with God, published nearly twenty years before. This came from the pen of Dr. Sherlock, known as the author of some works on Providence and Death, which do him more credit than his book against Owen; though none of them discover accurate views of the doctrines of the gospel. His strictures on Owen are entitled,—'A Discourse Concerning the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, and our Union and Communion with him,' &c. 1674. They are a confused mass of Socinianized arminianism, in which the doctrines of imputation and of justification by faith are denied; and language employed respecting the person of Christ and his work, which I shall not stain my pages with quoting. Owen appears to have considered it one of the pitiful attempts to run him down, and to destroy the credit of his writings, to which he had for some time been doomed to submit. He met it, in 'A Vindication of some passages in a Discourse concerning Communion with God, from the exceptions of William Sherlock, Rector of St. George, Buttolph Lane.' pp. 237,

[u] This was probably the first of those Royal grants to the Dissenters, which have since received the designation of the Regium Donum. They began to be regularly paid in the year 1723, during the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, and continue to be distributed to the present time, amongst poor Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations. A curious account of them will be found in the London Magazine for 1774, and in Dyer's Life of Robinson, p. 237.

[x] Memoirs, p. 30. Pref. to Answer to Stillingfleet.

[y] Life and Times, vol. ii. p. 16.

12mo. 1674.[z] The work on Communion is so far removed from controversy, that it seems wonderful it should have excited it; and, as during the whole period that it had been published, it had been well received, it seems the more strange. But when matter of accusation is sought, no human character or production can be proof against its being found. Quoting some of Sherlock's perversions of his words and sentiments, he exclaims with considerable feeling: 'What doth this man intend? Doth he either not at all understand what I say, or doth he not care what he says himself? What have I done to him? Wherein have I injured him? How have I provoked him, that he should sacrifice his conscience and reputation to such a revenge?'[a] In railing and abuse, Sherlock was more than a match for Owen; but in the lists of theological warfare, he was a very dwarf in the grasp of a giant. Owen exposes his ignorance, his petulance and vanity, the inconsistency and absurdity of his statements, in such a manner as must have made him, if he had any sense of shame left, blush that he had ever meddled with a subject he so ill understood.

The controversy was taken up with great spirit by several others besides Owen. Robert Ferguson published in a thick octavo, 'The Interest of Reason in Religion, with the import and use of Scripture Metaphors, and some reflections on Mr. Sherlock's writings,' &c. 1675. A second attack on Sherlock came from the pen of Edward Polhill, Esq. 'An Answer to the Discourse of Mr. William Sherlock,' &c. 8vo. 1675. A third publication on the same side came from Vincent Alsop, the South of the Dissenters—'Antisozzo, or Sherlocismus enervatus,' &c. This was the first work in which Alsop signalized himself, and both by his wit and his talents, on this and some other occasions, he rendered important service to the cause of truth. '*Speculum Sherlockianum;* or a Looking Glass in which the admirers of Mr. Sherlock may behold the man,' was supposed to be the production of Henry Hickman, a minister of learning and considerable controversial talents, who afterwards died in Holland.[b] 'Prodromus, or the character of Mr. Sherlock's Book,' was the production of Samuel Rolle, who also wrote 'Justification Justified,' in the same

[z] Works, vol. x. p. 339. [a] Ibid, p. 357. [b] Calamy, vol. ii. p. 69.

controversy. 'A Friendly Debate between Satan and Sherlock,' and a subsequent defence of it, were written by Thomas Danson, the ejected minister of Sibton. The object of his treatises was to shew, that on the principles of Sherlock, Satan might have the same hope of salvation as the human race.

Sherlock replied, in 1675, to Owen and Ferguson, but took no notice of his other opponents. Another clergyman also, Thos. Hotchkis, Rector of Staunton, interfered in the controversy, in 'A Discourse concerning the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness to us, and our sins to Him,' &c. 1675; in which he takes up both Dr. Owen, and Mr. Ferguson. This author seems substantially of Mr. Baxter's sentiments, and states the doctrine of imputation, in several places, with considerable accuracy. With these publications terminated the Communion controversy. The subjects discussed were of great importance, and the zeal with which the debate was gone into, discovers the interest that was then taken in them. It must have contributed greatly to the circulation of the work which occasioned it, and which has long out-lived the tempest of temporary rage, and the chilling damp of personal detraction; and still remains the object of commendation, when its antagonists are forgotten and unknown.

In 1674, he published the second volume of his work on the Hebrews; and in the same year appeared, the first part of his elaborate work on the Spirit. It is entitled, 'A Discourse concerning the Holy Spirit. In which an account is given of his name, nature, personality, dispensation, operations, and effects. His whole work in the Old and New Creation is explained; the doctrine concerning it vindicated from opposition and reproaches. The nature and necessity also of Gospel holiness; the difference between grace and morality, or a Spiritual life to God in Evangelical obedience, and a course of moral virtues, is stated and declared.' Fol. pp. 575.[c] The plan of this work embraced a number of most important subjects, either forming part of the direct work of the Spirit, or collaterally related to it. The Doctor not being able to finish the whole design at once, published the first part of it in

[c] Works, vol. ii.—iii.

this large volume; and at considerable intervals the remaining parts of his plan. As it will save repetitions, and enable us to form a more complete view of the entire scheme, I shall here introduce all the other branches in the order in which they were published. The first of them is 'The Reason of Faith, or an answer to that inquiry, Wherefore we believe the Scripture to be the Word of God?' &c. 8vo. 1677.[d] This is the first part of his view of the Spirit's work in illumination. In the following year came out the second part of this branch of the subject; 'The Causes, Ways, and Means of understanding the Mind of God, as revealed in his Word; and a declaration of the perspicuity of the Scriptures, with the external means of the interpretation of them.' 8vo.[e] In 1682, came out 'The Work of the Holy Spirit in Prayer, with a brief inquiry into the nature and use of mental prayer and forms.' 8vo.[f] And in 1693, two posthumous discourses, 'On the Work of the Spirit as a Comforter, and as he is the Author of Spiritual Gifts,'[g] completed the design.

These works embrace an extensive and interesting view of one great department of the Divine administration. As they are filled up with the ability and copiousness of their author, and are the fruit of his most matured experience. they constitute the completest exhibition of the Scripture doctrine of Spiritual agency and influence, to be found in any language. Any analysis that I could give would afford a very imperfect view of the works themselves; nor indeed is this necessary, as they are better known, either in the originals, or by some useful abridgments, than most of Owen's writings. A short notice of the relative connexion of the several subjects, therefore, is all I shall attempt.

The first part is properly occupied with an examination of the Divine nature and personality of the Spirit, and of his operations in conversion and sanctification. The Doctor justly attaches much importance to correct sentiments on these subjects; as the Deity of Christ, the doctrine of atonement, and the influence of the Spirit, are closely connected together, and constitute the leading truths of the Revelation of the Gospel. If the Spirit be not God, he

[d] Works, vol. iii. p. 227. [e] Ibid. p. 367. [f] Ibid. vol. iv. p. 1.
[g] Ibid. p. 155.

cannot be the author of those effects which are ascribed to him; and ought not to be the object of acknowledgment and supplication. On the other hand, if the corruption of human nature be as extensive and inveterate as the Scriptures represent it; without the provision of an Almighty agent, whose influence, when put forth, must prove irresistible, we could have no security for the reception of the atonement, and the application of the grace of Christ in the destruction of sin. All these subjects, with every plausible objection to them, Owen examines with great carefulness, and at great length. The whole strength of his theological vigour, now arrived at its highest maturity, is put forth, and scarcely any thing is left which we could desire to be said, either for illustration or defence.

From the Spirit and his influence, he is naturally led to treat of the Spirit's Revelation in the Scriptures; the kind of evidence on which we believe them to be the word of God; and the consistency of using means for the understanding of them, with dependence on spiritual illumination; together with the kind of means we are required to employ. This branch of the subject involves some of the nicest and most abstruse points of metaphysical and revealed theology. To say that Owen has removed every difficulty, and disentangled all the intricacies of a subject, whose difficulties and obscurities arise—partly from the limited capacities of the human constitution—partly from the limits which God has prescribed to himself in his communications to men—and partly from the perverse reasonings of philosophical divines, would be saying too much. He has, however, exhibited the doctrine of Scripture fairly and fully; and appealed to general experience for the truth of his representations, On the one hand, Owen was no enthusiast, he expected no illapses, or new revelations, or extraordinary intimations of the will of God; on the other hand, he knew that means are not powers, as laws are not energies; they are merely the *media* through which a superior influence is exerted, and which is in all cases essentially necessary, to give them a beneficial result. The truth, or fact is easily established, the nature of that mysterious link which connects Divine influence with human duty, it is not perhaps for us to explain.

To the office of the Spirit in exciting holy desires, forming religious habits, imparting consolation, and building up the people of God, he is naturally led in the last part of his undertaking. Here there is much practical instruction, combined with valuable illustration of various parts of the heavenly economy. Speaking of the whole work, Nathaniel Mather, who writes the preface to the posthumous volume, says, with much justness and felicity,—'They are not the crude, and hasty, and untimely abortions of a self-full, distempered spirit, much less the boilings over of inward corruption and rottenness, put into fermentation; but the mature, sedate, and seasonable issues of a rich magazine of learning, well digested with great exactness of judgment. There is in them a great light reflected on, as well as derived from, the Holy Scriptures, those inexhaustible fountains of light, in sacred things. They are not filled with vain impertinent janglings, nor with a noise of multiplied useless distinctions; nor with novel and uncouth terms, foreign to the things of God, as the manner of some is *ad nauseam usque*. But there is in them, a happy and rare conjunction of solidity, clearness, and heart-searching spirituality.'

This work was not undertaken merely for the sake of writing a book on this important subject; it was called for by the circumstances of the times in which the Doctor lived. During the period of England's convulsions, many extravagances, and abuses prevailed; and on no subject more than that of Spiritual influence. The wildest doctrines and speculations were sported in the most fearless manner, as if men had been resolved to outvie one another in outrages on Scripture doctrine and common sense. Prophecies and visions, dreams and voices from heaven were publicly sported, to the astonishment of the multitude, the amusement of the scoffer, and the grief of the sober and enlightened Christian. New sects were every day springing up, each more fanatical or erroneous than the former; and though they had in general but an ephemeral existence, they produced, while they lasted, injurious effects on true religion, and left very baneful consequences behind them. The violent excitement of this period could not be of lasting duration; but after its strength was spent,

its influence might be traced on three distinct classes of persons, which, in one form or another, remain to the present day.

The pretenders to high illumination, and spiritual enjoyment, independently of the Scriptures, and of other external means, settled under the general denomination of Quakers. The incongruous atoms which had floated about under different names and various forms, were at length digested into a body, combining the elements of mysticism, philosophical calmness, and moral propriety in a very singular degree. From carrying the doctrine of invisible and spiritual agency too far, the extreme of denying it altogether was easily got into. Hostility to reason as a gift of God, as the means of examining the evidence of his revelation, and of ascertaining its meaning, led naturally to its deification, as the alone guide and instructor of man. The abettors of these views found an asylum in the cold regions of Socinianism. While, by the former class, the Spirit was treated as a kind of familiar, and his written communications despised; by the latter, his existence was denied, and his operations blasphemed. A third class, forming no distinct sect, or known by any specific designation, though more numerous than both the former, also arose out of the circumstances and changes of the times. A class which pretended respect for religion, and hatred of enthusiasm; but which, under the latter term of reproach, included some of the most sacred truths of Christianity, and its most important influence on the human character. Such persons did not in words deny the existence of the Spirit, but his operations in converting, sanctifying, and comforting a sinner, were the objects of their unqualified and never-ending hostility. The follies of the former period, and of the few fanatics who still survived it, were exaggerated, and charged on the many who maintained the proprieties, and the doctrines of Christianity. The Court of Charles took the lead in this refined system of irreligion. Nothing was heard of but philosophy and reason, not as opposed to rant and nonsense; but to Scripture and scriptural piety. Genuine religion was run down under the pretence of laughing at fanaticism, and decrying sectarian folly. Fawning courtiers encouraged the wanton levity of Charles; while

worldly ecclesiastics, and hungry poets, furnished his repasts, and regaled the depraved propensities of the admiring and deluded crowd.

Such was the state of the country when Owen formed the plan of his work on the Spirit. The objects which it embraced, included the errors and vices of the various classes now mentioned. It was designed to furnish information to the ignorant but well meaning enthusiast; an antidote to the wild sportings of deluded deceivers; a defence of the Spirit's character and agency against Socinians; a vindication of the true doctrine of Spiritual influence against the increasing tide of Court infidelity, and clerical Arminianism; and a combined and harmonious view of the truths connected with the main subject of discussion. The work was loudly demanded, the qualifications of the undertaker were beyond any then possessed by 'his equals in his own nation;' and besides the success which attended it at the time, it has ever since continued to render a most important service to the cause of pure and undefiled religion.

It would have been too much to expect that this work should pass without opposition. Although it professedly wages war with none, it in fact opposes many. Fanatics and Socinians, indifferent to its reasonings for opposite reasons—the former believing too much, the latter too little, allowed it to proceed unnoticed. But the High Church partly felt differently. William Clagett, 'Preacher to the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, and one of his Majesty's Chaplains in ordinary,' published, 'A Discourse concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit; with a confutation of some part of Dr. Owen's book on that subject.' 1678. The object of this work is to shew, that Owen is very ignorant of the meaning of Scripture, a bungler in reasoning; and that his views of the natural wickedness of man, and of the power of God in converting him, are much too strong! The sentiments of Clagett are a confused mixture of Pelagian arminianism, which distinguished the body of the English clergy in the days of Charles II.

On this work of Clagett, Mr. John Humfrey, who was but a muddy writer himself, made some observations in his 'Peaceable Disquisitions,' complaining of the uncivil man-

ner in which Dr. Owen had been treated by his opponent. This led Clagett to publish a second volume of his work, in which he proceeds in his attack on Owen, and animadverts on Humfrey's attack on himself. He originally designed his work should extend to three parts. At the end of the second, he tells Dr. Owen, 'It remains only to shew you, that the ancients are not for your turn (the Doctor having quoted them occasionally in the margin of his work); which through the blessing of God, I intend to do in another part of this discourse, which shall contain a history of their judgments on these points.'[h] This volume the author had prepared for the press, but it happened that the manuscript was lodged with a friend of his, whose house was burned, and the book perished in the flames.[i] An abridgment of the two first parts was published in 1719, by Henry Stebbing; but neither the original nor the abridgment was ever much known. Clagett himself was a respectable man, and one of those whom Bishop Burnet speaks of as an honour both to the church and to the age in which they lived; but he certainly did not understand the subject on which he undertook to confute Dr. Owen, to whom as a theologian he was very far inferior.

The Doctor anticipated opposition to his work, both from his past experience of the humour of the times, and from what he knew of man's natural dislike to many of the doctrines he had endeavoured to defend and illustrate. In the preface to the Reason of Faith, he says, 'Where I differ in the explanation of any thing belonging to the subject, from the conceptions of other men, I have candidly examined such opinions, and the arguments by which they are confirmed, without straining the words, cavilling at the expressions, or reflecting on the persons of the authors. And whereas, I have been myself otherwise dealt with by many, and know not how soon I may be so again, I do hereby free the persons of such humours from all fear of any reply from me, or the least notice of what they shall be pleased to write or say. Such kind of writing is of the same consideration with me, as those multiplied false reports, which some have raised concerning me, the most of them so ridiculous and foolish, so alien from my principles, practice,

[h] Vol. ii. p. 290. [i] Biog. Brit. vol. iii. p. 598. Ed. Kippis.

and course of life, that I cannot but wonder how any persons pretending to gravity and sobriety, are not sensible that their credulity is abused in the hearing and repeating of them.' In pursuance of this resolution, and considering the work of Clagett in some respects of this nature, he treated it with entire silence.

The next work which Dr. Owen produced, is, 'The Nature and Punishment of Apostasy, declared in an Exposition of Hebrews vi. 4—6.' 8vo. pp. 612. 1676.[k] In the preface to this work, he complains most piteously of the state into which the Christian profession had sunk,—that the pristine glory of the Christian church was gone, and that the great body of those who assumed the name of Christ were degenerated into cold worldly professors, destitute of the power, and many of them even of the form of godliness. The work itself is only an enlarged Exposition of that part of the epistle to the Hebrews which treats particularly of apostasy, and on which the Doctor was then labouring. He thought the circumstances of the times required, and the importance of the subject justified, a separate treatise. He examines at considerable length, and with great acuteness, the secret causes or reasons of the apostasy of churches and professors; and points out the means of prevention or cure, in such a manner as is calculated to render the work exceedingly useful. Whether the awful evil which is the subject of this treatise, was more common in the days of Owen than our own, cannot be ascertained; but that, of the number who set out in early life with a tolerably fair profession, a very large proportion make shipwreck before they die, must be admitted by all who pay any attention to what passes around them. This abandonment of the truth, is sometimes sudden and flagrant; but in most cases it is gradual and almost imperceptible, till towards the last. It is the result of latent and unperceived causes, which operate in secret long before their effects are externally visible. A Christian profession is so easily taken up, the influence of Divine truth and invisible things is so partial, and the power of inward corruption and outward temptation so strong, that much as we might deplore it, we can scarcely wonder that many become weary of the ways of righteousness, and turn again to folly. It is a comfort,

[k] Works, vol. xvii. p. 271.

however, to know that the 'foundation of God standeth sure,' that those who go out from the people of God were never actually of them, and that while all are called not to be high-minded, but to fear, 'the Lord knoweth them that are his,' and will perfect in the day of Christ that which he hath here begun. Those who are desirous of examining the subject fully, will find much valuable instruction and warning in this work of Owen.

On the 28th of January, 1676, the Doctor sustained a heavy affliction in the loss of his wife. In a letter written from Stadham some time before, but unfortunately without date, he speaks of her as much revived, so that he did not despair of her recovery;[l] but in this he was disappointed. He remained a widower about a year and a half; when, on the 12th of June, 1677, he again entered into the married state. His second wife was Mrs. Dorothy D'Oyly, widow of Thomas D'Oyly, Esq. of Chiselhampton near Stadham. Her own name was Michel, the daughter of a family of distinction at Kingston Russel, Dorsetshire. Both she and her former husband were members of the Church. She was much younger than the Doctor, and had lost her husband, Mr. D'Oyly, on the 28th of March, 1675. She was eminent for her good sense, piety, and affectionate disposition, and brought the Doctor a considerable fortune, which, with his own estate, and other property, enabled him to keep his carriage, and country house, at Ealing in Middlesex, where he mostly lived during the latter years of his life. This lady survived the Doctor many years; dying on the 18th of January, 1704. Her funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Watts on the 30th of the same month.[m] Mr. Gilbert, who probably knew her well, gives in the following lines of one of his Epitaphs on the Doctor, the character of the second as he had given that of the first wife, already quoted.

'Dorothea vice, non ortu, opibus, officiusve, secunda
Laboribus, Morbis, senioque ipso elanguenti
Indulgentissimam etiam se nutricem praestitit.'[n]

[l] Appendix.

[m] On the Lord's day on which her funeral sermon was preached, a collection was made in the church for the relief of the poor ministers in the country. The collection amounted to £44. The church book says, 'it happened on the same day our worthy sister, Mrs. Dorothy Owen, widow of the late Rev. Dr. Owen, our worthy pastor, had a funeral sermon preached for her.' [n] Memoirs, p. 38.

CHAP. XII.

Owen's assistants—Ferguson—Shields—Loeffs—Angier—Clarkson—Intercourse between Owen and Bishop Barlow respecting Bunyan—Owen publishes on Justification—On the Person of Christ—The Church of Rome no safe Guide—Death of Goodwin—Owen publishes on Union among Protestants—Controversy with Stillingfleet—Owen's Vindication of the Non-conformists—Publications of others on the same subject—Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation—Owen's Answer—Other Answers—Unfair conduct of Stillingfleet—Owen publishes on Evangelical Churches—His humble Testimony—On Spiritual-mindedness—Account of the Protestant Religion—Meditations on the Glory of Christ—His declining health—Last sickness—Letter to Fleetwood—Death—Funeral—Clarkson's Sermon on the occasion—Last Will—Sale of his Library—Monument and Inscription—Portraits of Owen—General view of his character as a Christian—A Minister—A Writer—Conclusion.

DURING the latter part of his life, Dr. Owen had generally some person to assist him in his public labours, who also acted occasionally as his amanuensis. Among these we may notice, Robert Ferguson, a native of Scotland, and who possessed a living in Kent before the Restoration. After his ejectment, he taught University learning at Islington, and for some time assisted Owen. He afterwards involved himself deeply in political intrigues, by which he brought himself into danger, and was under the necessity of fleeing to Holland. He took an active part in promoting the Revolution, and returned to England with William, by whom he was liberally rewarded. After this he is said to have turned Jacobite, and spent his life in continual agitation. He died at an advanced age in 1714, poor and despised, both by his brethren and the world. He wrote several religious works of various merit, and several political treatises, among which was, the Duke of Monmouth's manifesto, on his landing at Lynne in 1685.[a]

Another of the Doctor's assistants, was Alexander Shields, a Scotsman also, and a man who suffered much in the cause of God and his country. He is well known in Scotland as the author of some works which were long popular, and contributed much to promote the antipathy of the Scots to episcopacy—'The Hind let loose.' 'Mr. Renwick's Life, and Vindication of his dying Testimony.'

[a] Calamy's Account, vol. ii. p. 383. Continuation, vol. i. p. 544.

'A Vindication of the solemn League and Covenant,' &c. He became minister of St. Andrews after the Revolution, and was much esteemed by King William. He was appointed to go to Darien as minister of the Scots colony there; but as the attempt failed from want of management, and of sufficient support, he went to Jamaica where he died.[b]

Isaac Loeffs or Loafs acted in the same capacity to Owen for a time. He was M. A. and Fellow of Peter House, Cambridge. He was ejected from the Rectory of Shenley in Hertfordshire, after which he came to London. From the Church books of Bury-street, it appears that he was chosen teacher for a time, either with Dr. Owen, or Mr. Clarkson. He was a respectable man, and author of a work in 8vo. 'The Soul's ascension in a state of separation.' He died in July, 1689.[c]

Samuel Angier, who had been a student at Christ Church, where he continued till the act of Uniformity, also assisted Dr. Owen; and lived in the house with him. He was exposed to frequent trouble on account of his preaching. Warrants were often taken out against him, and in 1680, he was excommunicated at Stockport Church. He was an excellent scholar, a judicious and lively preacher, an eminent Christian, and zealous of good works. He became pastor of one of the oldest Independent Churches in England, at Duckenfield in Cheshire, where he died in 1713, at the age of seventy-five.[d]

His last assistant, and successor in the Church of Bury-street, was David Clarkson. This excellent man had been educated at Cambridge, and was a fellow of Clare-hall, where he had under his charge the celebrated Archbishop Tillotson, who maintained the highest respect for his tutor, as long as he lived. He was, says Baxter,[e] a divine of extraordinary worth for solid judgment, healing moderate principles, acquaintance with the fathers, great ministerial abilities, and a godly upright life. Birch speaks of him with equal respect, 'He was eminent for his writings, particularly one, "No evidence of diocesan Episcopacy in the primitive times," in answer to Dr. Stillingfleet; and ano-

[b] Biog. Scoticana, pp. 367, 368. Ibid. vol. i. pp. 220, 221.
[c] Non-con. Mem. vol. ii. pp. 312, 313.
[e] Life, part iii. p. 97.

ther on the same subject was printed after his death."[f] He was ejected from the living of Mortlake, in Surry, in 1662, after which he lived in concealment for some time. In July 1682, he was chosen co-pastor with Dr. Owen, and succeeded to the entire charge on his death. Such a colleague must have been a great comfort to the Doctor, who speaks of him in some of his letters with great respect and affection. He did not, however, survive him long, as he died suddenly on the 14th of June, 1686, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. I cannot resist quoting part of the conclusion of the beautiful sermon which Dr. Bates preached on the occasion of his death.[g]

'He was a man of sincere godliness, and true holiness, which are the divine part of a minister, without which all other accomplishments are not likely to be effectual for the great end of the ministry, which is to translate sinners from the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Conversion is the special work of divine grace, and it is most likely that God will use those as instruments in that blessed work, who are dear to him, and earnestly desire to glorify him. God ordinarily works in spiritual things as in natural: for as in the production of a living creature, besides the influence of the universal cause, there must be an immediate agent of the same kind for the forming of it; so the Divine wisdom orders it, that holy and heavenly ministers should be the instruments of making others so. Let a minister be master of natural and artificial eloquence, let him understand all the secret springs of persuasion, let him be furnished with learning and knowledge, yet he is not likely to succeed in his employment, without sanctifying grace. That gives him a tender sense of the worth of souls, that warms his heart with ardent requests to God, and with zealous affections to men for their salvation. Besides, an

[f] Life of Tillotson, p. 4. This was his 'Primitive Episcopacy, stated and cleared from the Holy Scriptures, and ancient Records.' 8vo. 1688. In this work he successfully proves that a Bishop, in the days of the apostles, and for three centuries afterwards, was no more than a pastor of a single Congregation. His 'Discourse concerning Liturgies,' printed in 1689, shews successfully that no forms of prayer were prescribed or imposed during the first four centuries; 'till the state of the Church was rather to be pitied than imitated; and what was discernible therein different from preceding times were wrecks and ruins rather than patterns,' p. 198. Both works abound with valuable learning, and cogent reasonings, and are entitled to a distinguished place in the Episcopal controversy.

[g] Non-con. Mem. vol. iii. pp. 305, 306.

unholy minister unravels in his actions his most accurate discourses in the pulpit; and like a carbuncle that seems animated with the light and heat of fire, but is a cold dead stone; so, though with apparent earnestness he may urge men's duties on them, he is cold and careless in his own practice, and his example unnervates the efficacy of his sermons. But this servant of God was a real saint, a living spring of grace in his heart diffused itself in the veins of his conversation. His life was a silent repetition of his holy discourses. While opportunity lasted, with alacrity, and diligence, and constant resolution, he served his blessed Master, till his languishing distempers, prevailed upon him. But then the best Physician provided him the true remedy of patience. His death was unexpected, yet, as he declared, no surprise to him; for he was entirely resigned to the will of God. He desired to live no longer than he could be serviceable. His soul was supported with the blessed hope of enjoying God in glory. With holy Simeon, he had Christ in his arms, and departed in peace, to the salvation of God above."[h]

About this time some correspondence took place between Owen and his old tutor Barlow, now advanced to the Episcopate, respecting John Bunyan. This excellent man, more celebrated than most of the persons who ever wore a mitre, had suffered long and grievously from imprisonment, by which the servant, but not the word of the Lord had been bound: as during his confinement he produced those works which have immortalized his name, and diffused most extensively the knowledge of Christ. By the existing law, if any two persons would go to the bishop of the diocese, and offer a cautionary bond that the person should conform in half a year, the bishop might release him upon the bond. A friend of Bunyan requested Dr. Owen to give him a letter of introduction to the bishop on his behalf, which he readily granted. When the letter was delivered to Barlow, he told the bearer, 'that he had a particular regard for Dr. Owen, and would deny him nothing he could legally do; and that he would be willing even to stretch a little to serve him. But this, said he, is a new thing; I must therefore take a little time to consider it; and

[h] Bates' Works pp. 841, 842.

if in my power I will readily do it.' Being waited upon about a fortnight after for his answer, he replied—that he was informed he might do it; but as the law provided, that in case the bishop refused, application should be made to the Lord Chancellor, who thereupon would issue an order to the Bishop to take the bond and release the prisoner. 'Now, as it is a critical time,' said he, 'and I have many enemies, I desire you would move the Chancellor in the case, and upon his order I will do it.' He was told this would be an expensive mode of proceeding, that the man was very poor, and that as he could legally release him without this order, it was hoped he would remember his promise to Dr. Owen. But he would consent on no other terms, which at length were complied with, and Bunyan set at liberty.[i]

I give this anecdote as it occurs in Asty's memoirs of Owen, although I find some difficulty in reconciling it with the chronology of the period. Bunyan was imprisoned in 1660, and is said to have been kept in durance about twelve years and a half. He must consequently have been released in 1673. But Barlow was not made a Bishop till 1675. Whether Bunyan's first term of imprisonment was divided, or whether he was confined a second time after the first twelve years, I cannot ascertain. There must have been some foundation for the reported interference of Owen with Bishop Barlow, as most of the memoirs of Bunyan, as well as those of Owen, take notice of it. It is said that Owen was in the practice of frequently hearing Bunyan preach when he came to London; which led Charles II. to express his astonishment that a man of the Doctor's learning could hear a tinker preach; to which Owen is said to have replied—'Had I the tinker's abilities, please your Majesty, I would most gladly relinquish my learning.'[k] Bunyan appears to have been a very popular preacher, and must have had something exceedingly attractive in his address. In the middle of winter, he would sometimes have more than twelve hundred hearers, before seven o'clock in the morning of a week-day; and when he visited the metropolis, one day's notice of his preaching would bring many more

[i] Memoirs, p. 30.

[k] Ivimey's Hist. of the Eng. Bap. vol. ii. p. 41.

than the place of worship could contain.[l] I do not know that any thing of the same nature occurred again, till the days of Whitefield and Wesley.

Barlow's conduct in the affair of Bunyan, though not the most creditable to himself, did not altogether break up the intercourse between him and Owen. Being afterwards together, the Bishop asked the Doctor what he could object to their liturgical worship. To which Owen replied—'Means appointed by men for attaining an end of Christ, exclusive of the means appointed by Christ himself for attaining that end, are unlawful: but the worship of the liturgy with all its ceremonies is a means appointed for an end of Christ, the edification of his church—exclusive of the means appointed by Christ for that purpose: therefore it is unlawful.' He urged the argument from Ephes. iv. 8—12. 'He gave gifts unto men—for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.' The Bishop answered, 'Their ministers might preach and pray.' But said the Doctor, 'The administration of the sacraments is one principal means of the edification of the church, but the use of the liturgy is exclusive of the exercise of all gifts in the administration of the Lord's Supper.' The Bishop paused—'Don't answer suddenly,' said the Doctor, 'but think of it till our next meeting,' which never took place.[m] This is part of his argument in the work on Liturgies. They were not introduced into the church, till, from its corruption by secular influence, it began to be served by persons, who could not lead its devotions. The great body of the clergy at the Reformation were in this condition. They were unfit to preach, and therefore the state provided them with sermons; they were unable to pray, and therefore it provided them with a service book.

The latter years of Owen's life were mostly devoted to writing, and the labours of the ministry. He appears to have been frequently laid aside from his public work; but every moment of his private retirement must have been employed; as during this period, some of his most elaborate performances were published, or prepared for the press. To these, in their order, it will now be proper to direct our attention.

[l] Gillies' Collections, vol. i. p. 254.

[m] Memoirs, pp. 30, 31.

In 1677, he published, 'The Reason of Faith,' of which we have spoken in our account of his work on the Spirit. This year, also appeared, 'The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, explained, confirmed, and vindicated.' 4to. pp. 560.[n] The subject of this volume embraces the grand truth of the Gospel,—what Luther denominated—'Articulus stantis et cadentis Ecclesiæ,'—the great evidence of a standing or falling Church. From the days of Paul it has met with opposition, not from the world only, but from men professing godliness, who have not understood it. In proportion as this doctrine is known and believed, will the religion of an individual be comfortable to himself, and acceptable to God;—and, from the degree of clearness and decision with which it is preached, may be inferred the degree in which true religion flourishes in any community. Owen had studied the subject long and profoundly. The doctrine was dear to his own heart, and, as he derived from it all his comfort as a sinner, it constituted the favourite theme of his public labours. He had examined many controversial books on the subject, and attended to the innumerable scholastic and metaphysical arguments by which it had been either attacked or defended. From these he had derived little satisfaction. He considered it a doctrine, not at all suited to a speculative state of mind. 'But where any persons are made sensible of their apostasy from God, of the evil of their natures and lives, with the dreadful consequences that attend thereon in the wrath of God, and eternal punishment due to sin, they cannot judge themselves more concerned in any thing than in the knowledge of the Divine way of deliverance from this condition.' For the sake of such persons, entirely, he investigates the Divine revelation on this subject, and endeavours to ascertain, 'how the conscience of a distressed sinner may obtain assured peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

To such, and to such alone, will this doctrine appear to be of importance. When engaged in the serious inquiry, 'What must we do to be saved?' every thing that explains the nature, certainty, and way of deliverance will be considered of unspeakable moment. In prosecuting his investi-

[n] Works, vol. xi. p. 1.

gation, the Doctor does not allow himself to wander through the mazes and contradictions of human opinion; he keeps constantly in view the character of God, as a Judge and a Lawgiver, the actual condition of man as a sinner, and the glorious provision made by the plan of mercy for securing the honour and harmony of the Divine perfections, in connexion with extending salvation to the guilty. He examines the nature and use of faith,—the import of the terms justification, imputed righteousness, and imputation of sin to Christ. He points out the difference between personal and imputed righteousness; illustrates a number of passages of Scripture in which the subject is treated, and refutes objections against his views. He maintains the consistency of the doctrine with living soberly, righteously, and godly in the world; and shews that between Paul and James there is a perfect agreement, as they treat of the subject under different aspects.

The great extent of this work is one of the strongest objections to it. Written with the views that he had, it ought to have been his study to reduce the subject within the narrowest limits possible. An anxious inquirer is in danger of losing himself in the multitude of his words, and the variety and prolixity of his discussions. But Owen could more easily expand than contract, and the present volume is much fitter for an established Christian, who knows how 'to distinguish things that differ,' than for a bewildered, distressed sinner, who wishes a simple answer to the question, 'How may I be just before God?'

The principal works of Owen, indeed, are to be considered as so many Bodies or Systems of Divinity; in which one leading principle is placed in the centre, and all the others ranged round it, to establish its truth, illustrate its importance, and exhibit its influence. This remark will apply to his work on Perseverance,—his Vindiciæ,—the Person of Christ,—and the Spirit,—as well as to the present. In this respect, they are very valuable, as they contain a more expanded illustration of the magnitude and relative connexions of the grand points in the Revelation of Heaven of which they treat, than almost any other human productions. While this plan of discussion has important advantages, it is attended also with various inconveniences.

It is unfavourable to that simplicity with which the Bible states all its doctrines, and with which it is of importance they should ever be viewed. It gives Divine truth too much the appearance of artificial or systematic arrangement, and by the very terms which it employs, exposes it to opposition, and oppresses it with explanations that impede rather than forward its progress.

Few points in theology have been made more mysterious and apparently inexplicable than those of imputation, and justification. Perhaps, could we divest them of the embarrassments of theoretical speculation, they would appear in a different light. The *imputation of guilt* and of *righteousness*, in the Scripture use of these phrases, I apprehend amounts chiefly to a transfer, not of *character* or *deserving*, but of effects or consequences, either in the way of enjoyment, or of suffering. Righteousness is imputed, or reckoned to us, as sin was imputed to Christ. On our account, he, though without sin, was treated as a sinner. On his account, we, though sinners, are treated as righteous. His sufferings were the evidences of the imputation of our guilt—our enjoyment of pardon, acceptance, and eternal life, are the evidences of the imputation of his righteousness to us: that is, it is entirely for his sake, and on account of his work, that we receive them. By voluntary engagement, he became subject to the one; by faith we partake of the other. Justification is another expression for the same thing: for, according to Psalm xxxii. 1, 2, quoted Rom. iv. 1—8. the justification of a sinner,—the imputation of righteousness,—the non-imputation of sin,—and the forgiveness, or covering of transgression, are all tantamount expressions, conveying substantially the same idea. Sanctification is a change of character,—justification a change of state or condition. There is no declaration of innocence,—no transfer of desert,—no communication of personal merit,—no grant of right;—but an alteration of the relative situation of God and the sinner in their views and treatment of one another. As soon as a sinner believes the testimony of God concerning Christ's work, there is a deliverance from the displeasure of God, and from all the penal consequences of his transgressions; he obtains the enjoyment of positive happiness or favour

from above, and the hope of eternal life. This is God's revealed method of treating the ungodly who believe. On their part, there is a ceasing to look on God as an enemy,—the love of his revealed and gracious character,—an aversion to sin,—and a readiness to obey Divine authority. The sinner is condemned in law, and found guilty by the judge; but is forgiven and restored to favour by the gracious act of the Sovereign, in consideration of the glorious character and mediation of his Son. The continuance of this treatment, or perpetuation of this state, is secured by the peculiar provisions of the covenant of mercy, and constitutes that justification which commences with the saving belief of the gospel, and will at last be declared before the august assembly of the universe; when the solemn sentence of acquittal shall be pronounced from the throne of mercy, on the multitude of the redeemed.

Owen proves successfully, that the object of that faith, by which we are justified, is not Divine truth in general, to which an assent is given; and that it is not the belief that *our sins in particular* are pardoned, which is no part of the testimony of God; but 'the Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the ordinance of God in his work of mediation for the salvation of lost sinners, and as unto that end proposed in the promise (testimony) of the gospel.'[n] It is believing on God's authority, that Jesus is the all-sufficient and appointed Saviour of sinners. The long chapter which follows this, on the *nature* of justifying faith, is unnecessary, and more calculated to perplex than enlighten. His definition is clumsy and incorrect. The apostles never entered into such definitions or discussions. For, after pointing out the proper object of faith, explaining the ground on which it is the duty of men to believe on Christ, and the genuine effects of it, what use is there in endless disputes about the nature of the act of believing? Why not also discuss the nature of *understanding, willing, seeing, hoping, &c.?* Such speculations may belong to the science of metaphysics, or pneumatology; but have no relation to the doctrine of Christ. They only confound the simple, and bewilder the inquirer. Faith is connected with justification, because it is by the testimony of God we are made ac-

[n] P. 114.

quainted with the character and work of Christ; and because it is only by faith that a testimony can be received. Salvation is through faith, merely as faith is opposed to work and merit of every kind.[o] 'It is of faith, that it might be by grace, or favour.'

A feeble reply was attempted to this work by a clergyman of the name of Hotchkis, who had formerly attacked some things on the same subject, in Owen's work on Communion. The Doctor threw out a few remarks in the course of the discussion on Justification, on his, seemingly wilful, perversions of his words and sentiments. But he took no notice of the second attack, which does not seem to have deserved much attention. John Humfrey also animadverted on some parts of it; but he says, 'the Doctor, in presence of Sir Charles Wolsley, declared that he could bear with him in the difference; and though one chapter of the "Peaceable Disquisition" is professedly against the Doctor, he never took offence or offered any vindication.'[p] Humfrey was nearly of Baxter's sentiments on the subject of Justification. The same remark applies to Sir Charles Wolsley, who speaks of Owen's work on Justification, as written in reply to one of his.[q] This is his 'Justification Evangelical: or a plain impartial account of God's method in Justifying a sinner.' 1667. The first part of this small work, which treats of justification and imputation, is on the whole very excellent; but in the latter part of it, he speaks very improperly on the subject of faith, and on jus-

[o] A curious fact respecting this book, is mentioned in the life of Mr. Joseph Williams of Kidderminster. 'At last, the time of his (Mr. Grimshaw's, an active clergyman of the Church of England) deliverance came. At the house of one of his friends, he lays his hand on a book, and opens it with his face towards a pewter shelf. Instantly his face is saluted with an uncommon flash of heat. He turns to the title page, and finds it to be Dr. Owen on Justification. Immediately he is surprised with such another flash. He borrows the book, studies it, is led into God's method of justifying the ungodly, hath a new heart given him, and now behold he prayeth.' Whether these flashes were electrical or galvanic, as Southey in his Life of Wesley supposes, it deserves to be noticed that it was not the *flash*, but the *book* which converted Grimshaw. The occurrence which turned his attention to it, is of importance merely as the second cause, which, under the mysterious direction of Providence, led to a blessed result.

[p] Humf. Mediocria, p. 56.

[q] 'I suppose you know his book of Justification was particularly written against mine. Very many have pressed me to answer it, which I acknowledge to you, I did not look upon as *duram provinciam*. The great friendship that was between him and me, might well seem sufficient to have biassed me not to reply; but the true reason was, I thought that little cottage I had erected was in no great danger of being shocked or demolished by any thing in that book.'—*Letter from Sir Charles Wolsley to Mr. Humfrey, inserted in the Mediocria.*

tification by performing the conditions of the gospel. Sir Charles appears to have been a pious and well-informed man, who took a deep interest in the state of religion, and in the discussions respecting it, which then agitated the country. Besides this work he wrote several others:—'The Unreasonableness of Atheism.' 1669. 'The Reasonableness of Scripture Belief,' 1672; which is a very excellent book, and is frequently quoted by Professor Hallyburton, in his work on Deism. And 'The Mount of Spirits,' 1691, of which I know nothing. The worthy Baronet was the eldest son of Sir Robert Wolsley, and succeeded his father in 1646. He married the youngest daughter of Lord Say and Seal, by whom he had a numerous family. He was one of Cromwell's Council of State, and also a Lord of his upper house. He had great interest in his own county during the Protectorates, and continued to enjoy it after the Restoration, serving in several parliaments subsequent to that event. He lived long after the Revolution, dying on the 9th of October, 1714, in the eighty-fifth year of his age.[r]

In 1679, appeared 'Christologia: or a Declaration of the Glorious Mystery of the Person of Christ, God and Man; with the infinite wisdom, love, and power of God, in the contrivance and constitution of it. As also, of the grounds and reasons of his Incarnation, the nature of his Ministry in Heaven, the present state of the Church above thereon, and the use of his Person in religion. With an account and vindication of the honour, worship, faith, love, and obedience due unto him from the Church.' 4to.[s] The preface to this work contains some historical notices of the controversies respecting the person of Christ, which had agitated the church, and of the means which the friends of truth had employed in its defence. Speaking of the Councils, which were called in the fourth and following centuries, for the purpose of declaring the orthodox doctrines, and of healing divisions, he says, 'They proved the most pernicious engines for the corruption of the faith, worship, and manners of the church. Yea, from the beginning, they were so far from being the only way of preserving the truth, that it was almost constantly prejudiced by the addition of

[r] Noble's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 478.

[s] Works, vol. xii. p. 1.

their authority for confirming it. Nor was there any one of them, in which the mystery of iniquity did not work unto the laying of some rubbish, in the foundation of that fatal apostacy which afterwards openly ensued.'[t]

The entire treatise is founded on our Lord's declaration to Peter, respecting the foundation of the church, Matth. xvi. 16. This declaration, the Doctor conceives to contain three important truths,—that the person of Christ, the Son of the living God, as vested with his offices, is the foundation of the church:—that the power and policy of hell will ever be exerted against the relation of the church to this foundation:—but, that the church built on this rock shall never be disjoined from it, or destroyed. The work is accordingly devoted to the illustration of these, and the other topics noticed in the title, which I have given at length.

The volume contains many important, and some beautiful passages, both in the direct discussion of the subject, and incidentally introduced. His views of the mediation and glory of Christ in Heaven, are uncommonly elevated. Losing sight of the refinements of a technical theology, he speaks out the feelings of his soul, as one whose faith and hope had long been fixed on that which is within the vail, and whose heart burned with love to that Redeemer whose presence and glory fill the holiest of all. The immortal life, and unlimited power of Jesus secure the existence of the church, and encourage the most perfect confidence in its future triumphs. Amidst all its declensions, and tribulations, its perpetuity has never been endangered; and whatever may be the scenes of its future condition, we know that full provision is made in the scheme of revealed love, for the universality of its establishment on earth, and the eternity of its glory in heaven. The Doctor's views of the person and undertaking of Christ, as motives to love him, are also very fine. 'These things,' he says, 'have not only rendered prisons and dungeons more desirable to the people of God, than the most goodly palaces, on future accounts; but have made them really places of such refreshment and joy, as men shall seek in vain to extract out of all the comforts that this world can afford.'

[t] Works, vol. xii. p. xvii.

While the work, as a whole, is full of instruction and consolation, there are parts of it, which I either imperfectly understand, or cannot fully approve. I confess myself hostile to all prolix discussions, or attempts at explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, or the mode of subsistence, either in Deity, or in the constitution of the person of Christ. In as far as these things are at all revealed, they are matters of fact requiring belief; in so far as they remain mysteries, endeavouring to explain them is useless and absurd. The statements of Scripture on these subjects are all very short, and abundantly more intelligible than any human dissertations, which have ever been written on them. When Owen speaks of the Divine nature of Christ as God, or of his human nature as man, or of these natures united, constituting Immanuel, I understand, and go along with him. But when he speaks of the 'Eternal generation of the Divine person of the Son, being a necessary internal act of the Divine nature, in the Person of the Father,' he uses language, which I conceive to be both unscriptural and unintelligible. This is travelling out of the record, the only effect of which, in all such cases, is darkening counsel by words without knowledge. The language of the ancient creeds, and the discussions of the schoolmen have, I believe, done more to stumble men at the doctrine of the Trinity, than all other things put together. How difficult, but how important is it, to follow revelation fully, and to be satisfied with its limits! It is but a very small portion of the volume, however, to which any objection can attach; a judicious Christian will derive no injury from any part of it, and may receive much comfort and establishment from the whole. The concluding exhortation of his preface, which he quotes from Jerome, demands the attention of all. 'Whether thou readest or writest, whether thou watchest or sleepest, let the voice of love to Christ, sound in thine ears: let this trumpet stir up thy soul; being overpowered with this love, seek him on thy bed, whom thy soul desireth and longeth for.'[u]

[u] Should the reader be desirous of examining what is said on the Sonship of Christ, he will find much information, in the following works:—Roel. Diss. de generatione Filii. Faber's Horæ Mosaicæ, vol. ii. § 2. chap. ii. Bryant's Philo-Judæus, p. 253. Dr. Adam Clarke's note on Luke i. 35. Ridgley's Body of Divinity, pp. 73—77. Edit. Glass. 1770. And a Tract on the subject, by the late Mr. Archibald M'Lean of Edinburgh, 1788. It is worthy of remark that Mr. Pierce of Exeter

This large work was followed, the same year, by a 4to. pamphlet of forty-seven pages, 'The church of Rome no safe Guide, or reasons to prove that no rational man, who takes due care of his own salvation, can give himself up to the conduct of that church in matters of religion.'[x]—It was the substance of two discourses preached to a private congregation, and which he published in consequence of the importunities of many who heard them. Instead of recommending any church as a guide, he advocates the exclusive right of the Holy Scriptures to this office, and points out the extreme danger of men giving themselves up to the blind guidance of the Romish church. As matters then stood in the country, a tract of this nature was very necessary, and much calculated to promote the object he had in view. The Morning Exercise against Popery among the Dissenters, in which the Doctor was engaged, had been established for some years, and had already produced several learned discourses on the popish controversy. No class of men then opposed so powerful a barrier to the restoration of Popery, or so vigorously exerted themselves in defence of the reformed faith, as the Protestant Dissenters. The greatest part of the Church clergy would have quietly submitted; and though the more respectable class of them felt, and owned the services of the Dissenters to the common cause, they afterwards deserted them, or united with the high church party in oppressive measures to crush them. It is thus that the friends of truth are often rewarded; their disinterested labours and sufferings are

extracts eight passages from the Works of Owen, in which he appears to plead for a *subordination* among the persons of the Trinity themselves. (Western Inquisition, p. 132, 133.) I am satisfied that Owen intended the language quoted by Pierce, to be understood in a sense perfectly consistent with the supreme Divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit; but the language itself I think highly objectionable. It is a curious fact that the most celebrated supporters of the scheme of eternal generation, have in the course of their discussions respecting it, been led to employ language completely subversive of the unoriginated and independent existence of the Son and Spirit—consequently of their Godhead: for a derived, dependant being, of whatever order or rank, cannot be God in the proper sense of the term. I refer to the '*Defensio Fidei*' of Bishop Bull—to the 'Exposition of the Creed' by Bishop Pearson—to Bishop Usher's Body of Divinity, and to Dr. Scott's Christian Life.—Passages on this subject from all these writers are collected by Dr. Clark in his 'Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity.'—Clark himself who was one of the most profound reasoners of his time, appears to have been driven to Arianism by his adoption of this scheme. I think it probable that Milton also was led to adopt his Arian sentiments by the same process.

[x] Works, vol. xviii. p. 591.

soon forgotten. But their reward is in heaven, and their record on high.

This year, the Doctor lost his old friend and fellow-labourer in Oxford, Dr. Thomas Goodwin, the last survivor of the five Independent brethren of the Westminster Assembly. After the Restoration he went to London, where he founded the Church which now meets in Fetter Lane. He lived very privately, and was employed chiefly in writing. The inscription on his tomb-stone in Bunhill fields, drawn up by Mr. Gilbert, gives him a very high character; which, however, his numerous writings very amply support. He had a most extensive acquaintance with church history—was profoundly skilled in the knowledge and interpretation of the Scriptures—the matter, form, discipline, and all that relates to the constitution of a church of Christ, he thoroughly investigated, and was eminently useful in his public labours. He died in the 80th year of his age, and in his last moments expressed himself with so much joy, thankfulness, and admiration of the grace of God, as extremely affected all who heard him.[y]

In the beginning of 1680, the Doctor produced another Ecclesiastico-political tract, in reference to the fears still entertained of the return of Popery. It is entitled, 'Some considerations about union among Protestants, and the preservation of the interests of the Protestant religion in this nation.'[z] It consists of only thirteen 4to pages, and has no name prefixed. There are some very judicious observations in it on the constitutional prerogatives of the throne—on the rights and liberties of the subject, and on the proper means of preserving the Established Church, and the toleration of Dissenters. He protests against the exercise of civil power in merely religious affairs. 'Let the church be protected in the exercise of its spiritual power, by *spiritual means only;* as preaching of the word, administration of the sacraments, and the like; whatever is farther pretended as necessary to any of the ends of true religion, or its preservation in the nation, is but a cover for the negligence, idleness, and insufficiency of some of the clergy, who would have an outward appearance of effect-

[y] Life prefixed to his Works.

[z] Works, vol. xvii. p. 593.

ing that by external force, which themselves by diligent prayer, sedulous preaching of the word, and an exemplary conversation, ought to labour for in the hearts of men.' He contends, that by magistrates limiting themselves to the punishment of the crimes cognizable by human judgment, and confining the church to the exercise of her spiritual powers—freedom of opinion and practice being enjoyed by others, Popery might be set at defiance, and Protestantism for ever maintained in Britain. Our past history illustrates the wisdom and justness of these sentiments, and any departure from them, must prove equally dangerous to the throne and the subject, to religion and liberty.

On the 11th of May, 1680, Dean Stillingfleet, who had formerly made himself known by publishing what Robinson calls 'an oily book, with *a nasty title*,'[a] preached a sermon before the Lord Mayor, 'On the Mischief of Separation,' in which he brands all the Dissenters with the odious crime of schism. The peace-maker now became a sower of discord, not without suspicion of being influenced by venal motives; as, according to Burnet, 'he went into the humours of the high sort of people, beyond what became him, perhaps *beyond his own sense of things*.' This unexpected and uncivil attack, roused all the energies of the Dissenters, and in a short time a number of able and spirited replies were published.

Dr. Owen produced 'A brief vindication of the Nonconformists from the charge of Schism, as it was managed against them in a sermon, by Dr. Stillingfleet.' 4to. pp. 56. 1680.[b] This is a very excellent pamphlet. Some of the Dissenters had complained of the unseasonableness of the learned Dean's philippic, on account of the danger to the Protestant faith, apprehended from Popery. Owen was of a different opinion. 'For it is meet,' he says, 'that honest men should understand the state of those things in which they are deeply concerned. Non-conformists might possibly suppose, that the common danger of all Protestants had reconciled the minds of the Conforming ministers to them, and I was really of the same judgment myself. If it

[a] Irenicum, or A weapon salve for the Church's wouuds, 1659.
[b] Works, vol. xix. p. 569.

be not so, it is well they are fairly warned what they have to expect, that they may prepare themselves to undergo it with patience.' He points out the unfairness of charging the Non-conformists with the sin of schism, and their ministers with insincerity. He shews that the tendency of the Dean's discourse was to stir up persecution against the Dissenters, of which they had already got quite enough; and very fairly argues with him, on the ground he had himself taken, the subject of schismatical separation. Towards the close, he replies to the Dean's advice, that the Dissenters 'should not be always complaining of their hardships and persecutions.' 'After so many of them have died in common jails, so many of them endured long imprisonments, not a few being at this time in common durance; so many driven from their habitations into a wandering condition, to preserve for a while the liberty of their persons; so many have been reduced to want and penury by the taking away of their goods, and from some the very instruments of their livelihood; after the prosecutions which have been against them in all courts of justice in this nation; after so many ministers and their families have been brought into the utmost outward straits, which nature can subsist under; after all their perpetual fears and dangers—they think it hard they should be complained of for complaining, by them who are at ease.'

Of this Vindication, Stillingfleet said, 'Dr. Owen treated me with that civility and decent language, that I cannot but return him thanks for them, though I was far from satisfied with his reasonings.'[c] Owen was followed in the controversy by Mr. Baxter, who, in his 'Answer to Dr. Stillingfleet's charge of Separation,' did not treat the Dean with so much courtesy; who accordingly complains 'of his anger and unbecoming passion.' A third reply was from a man of better spirit, Mr. John Howe, who, in 'A letter written from the country to a person of quality in the city,' expressed himself very firmly; but, as the Dean himself acknowledged, 'more like a well-disposed gentleman than a divine, without any mixture of rancour, and even with a great degree of kindness.' Vincent Alsop opposed his

[c] Unreasonableness of Separation, Pref. p. 69.

'Mischief of *Impositions*,' to Stillingfleet's Mischief of *Separation*. He briskly turns upon him his own words and phrases, and retorts his accusations. The book, said the Dean, resembled the bird of Athens, for it seemed to be made up of face and feathers. The fifth antagonist, was Mr. Barret, of Nottingham, who published an ingenious exposure of Stillingfleet's inconsistency and tergiversation in 'The Rector of Sutton (Stillingfleet's parish when he published the Irenicum), committed with the Dean of St. Pauls; or a defence of Dr. Stillingfleet's Irenicum, against his late sermon.' This seems to have galled the learned Dean exceedingly. He remarked, it was enough to make the common people suppose some busy justice of the peace had taken the Rector of Sutton, and Dean of St. Pauls, at some conventicle. And as a defence of his changes, he gravely tells the reader, that the Irenicum had been written twenty years before the laws against Dissenters had been established!

In the following year, the Dean took up all his opponents, in the 'Unreasonableness of separation, or an impartial account of the history, nature, and pleas, of the present separation from the communion of the church of England. To which several letters are annexed of eminent Protestant divines abroad, concerning the nature of our differences, and the way to compose them.' 4to. This work discovers considerable acuteness and research. The historical part of it displays a minute acquaintance with the sentiments and writings of the early separatists from the English church, and with the various views of the Presbyterian Puritans. He shews successfully, that many of the Puritans employed the same arguments against the Brownists, which the churchmen now urged against themselves. It cannot be denied that on the principles of many of his adversaries, the Dean had the better of the argument. The discussion turned chiefly on this point—Are the parochial churches true churches? If they be, why desert them? If you deny that they are, you are guilty of the uncharitableness which your forefathers charged on the separatists. If you hold occasional communion with them, which many of you do, and for the lawfulness of which most of you contend, why separate from them at all? Such were the di-

lemmas, on the horns of which, the reverend Dean endeavoured to toss his opponents.

Dr. Owen met him again in reply to this work.—'An answer to the Unreasonableness of Separation, and a defence of the Vindication of the Non-conformists from the guilt of schism.' 4to.[d] It was published along with his 'Inquiry into the nature of Evangelical churches.' In this work, Owen endeavours to avoid adopting any of the alternatives, which the Dean had pointed out. He explains what he understood as necessary to the character of a true church, and declares that wherever the scriptural evidences of it were afforded, he would most gladly acknowledge it. He also points out what he conceived to affect the character of a church, and that wherever these evils prevailed, he could not be. On his side, therefore, he pushes his adversary to make an election, which must have greatly puzzled him. Could he maintain that the parish churches of England generally consisted of 'faithful men.' Could he believe that the ministry was generally blameless, that discipline was faithfully administered, and that no unlawful impositions were laid on the conscience? Although Owen does not make any positive assertion on the subject, it is quite clear that the established church never was conducted on the principles for which he contends; and his views of the characters of church members, and the exercise of discipline alone, must have prevented his fellowship with any parochial assembly.

The controversy still raged, 'More work for the Dean,' was published by Mr. Thomas Wall, in answer to some of the Dean's reports against the Brownists. Mr. Barret replied a second time, in an 'Attempt to vindicate the principles of the Non-conformists, not only by Scripture, but by Dr. Stillingfleet's Rational Account.' Mr. Lob produced his 'Modest and Peaceable inquiry;' Mr. Baxter, his 'Second True Defence of the mere Non-conformists;' Mr. Humphrey, his 'Answer to Dr. Stillingfleet's book, as far as it concerned the Peaceable design;' and Mr. Gilbert Rule, as late as 1689, his 'Rational defence of Non-conformity.' The Dean, now made bishop, as the reward of his faithful services to the church, was not left to fight her

[d] Works, vol. xx. p. 251.

battles alone. An octavo volume appeared from the pen of a Presbyter of the Church of England, defending Dr. Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation; which, being taken up by some of the Dissenting pamphlets already noticed, produced next year, another thick octavo in its defence. This Presbyter, according to Baxter, was no other than Dr. Sherlock, who, perhaps, was not displeased to get secretly at his old adversaries, on account of their treatment of his book on the Knowledge of Christ. These are all the pamphlets, or volumes, on the Stillingfleet controversy, which I have discovered. They were numerous and prolix enough, it must be admitted; the characters who were engaged in it, and the place it must have occupied in the public mind, rendered some account of it necessary. Many of the pamphlets were anonymous; but I have assigned them to their respective authors, on evidence derived from the replies of their opponents, or for other reasons too unimportant to bring forward.

I cannot dismiss the subject without noticing another part of the debate. To Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, were subjoined some letters from foreign Presbyterians,—Le Moyne, Professor of Divinity at Leyden, L'Angle, Minister of Charenton, and the celebrated Claude. All these letters seemed to condemn the conduct of the English Non-conformists, and were evidently procured for the purpose of making it appear, that their separation was not the result of principle, but of caprice, or of something worse. The behaviour of these foreign Dissenters appeared very inexplicable at the time; and it was not till a volume of Claude's letters was published, long after, that it was fully explained. Stillingfleet, says Robinson, 'driven to great distress, got Compton, Bishop of London, to write to Claude, Le Moyne, and other French Presbyterians, for their opinion of English Presbyterianism. They gave complaisant, but wary answers. These letters were published by Stillingfleet, as suffrages for Episcopacy, and against Non-conformity. There could not be a more glaring absurdity; for no art can make that a crime at Dover, which is at the same time a virtue at Calais. Episcopacy and Non-conformity rest on the same arguments in both kingdoms, and a man who does not know this is not fit to write

on the controversy. Mr. Claude complained bitterly of this ungenerous treatment; but the letters that contained these complaints were *concealed till his death;* when they were printed by his son.' After quoting some strong passages from these letters to a lady, and to the Bishop of London, Robinson justly remarks in conclusion: 'The case, then, is this, Episcopalians not being able to maintain their cause by argument, endeavoured to do it by a majority of votes. In order to procure these, they sent a false state of the case to the French Protestants. The French, as soon as they understood the matter, complained of having been treated with duplicity, declared against the Bishops, and against the cause which they were endeavouring to support.'[e] Such tricks are exceedingly despicable, and only tend, in the issue, to ruin the cause they are designed to promote. Truth is equally independent of numbers and of names; but it is infamous to represent those as enemies to each other, who are really friends; and by unprincipled artifice to sow suspicion and discord among brethren.

The next work we have to notice, which was published partly during the Doctor's life, and partly after his death, is the important Treatise on Evangelical Churches. The first part of it, entitled 'An Inquiry into the Origin, Nature, Institution, Power, Order, and Communion of Evangelical Churches,' was published in 1681.[f] This was combined, as has been noticed, with his answer to Stillingfleet. The second part, entitled 'The True Nature of a Gospel Church, and its Government,' did not appear till 1688.[g] It was published with a preface, by I. C. whom I take to have been Isaac Chauncey, who succeeded Mr. Clarkson, in the pastoral charge of the church in Bury Street. He tells us, 'that the Doctor lived to finish it under his great bodily infirmities; whereby he saw himself hastening to the end of his race: yet so great was his love to Christ, that while he had life and breath he drew not back his hand from his service. Through the gracious support of Divine power, he corrected the copy before his departure. So that the reader may be assured that what is here is his:

[e] Robinson's Life of Claude, prefixed to the 2d Edit. of the Translation of his Essay, pp. 66, 67. [f] Works, vol. xx. p. 1. [g] Ibid p. 337.

and likewise, that it ought to be esteemed as his legacy to the Church of Christ, being a great part of his dying labours; and therefore it is most charitable to suppose that this work was written with no other design than to advance the glory and interest of Christ in the world; and that its contents were matter of great weight on his own spirit.'

We have ascertained the sentiments of Dr. Owen on the subject of the Constitution and Government of the Churches of Christ, at an early period of his career. We have seen what they were while he enjoyed honour and public support. It is gratifying to have so full a view of them at the end of his life, and in the very prospect of eternity. He adopted his views of the kingdom of Christ, with the prospect before him of losing all that was dear to him on that account; prosperity effected no change on his sentiments; amidst succeeding adversity and trouble he held them fast and defended them; and he took leave of the world with a solemn testimony in their support. These things are at least proofs of his growing confidence in their truth and importance; and of the sincerity of his own attachment to them.

I shall then endeavour to ascertain, from the work now before us, what were the last sentiments of the Doctor on these subjects. In part first, he examines the origin of a church, or church state,—shews that it is a Divine, and not a human appointment; and that all interferences of human authority with it are unlawful. 'Unless men by *their voluntary choice and consent*, from a sense of duty to the authority of Christ, in his institutions, do enter into a church state, they cannot by any other means be so framed into it, as to find acceptance with God in it. And the interpositions that are made by custom, tradition, the institutions and ordinances of men, between the consciences of those who belong, or would belong to such a state, and the immediate authority of God, are highly obstructive of this Divine order and all the benefits of it: for hence it comes to pass, that most men know neither *how* nor *whereby* they came to be members of this or that church, but only on this ground, that they were *born* where it did prevail.'

He denies the existence of a *Legislative* authority either in or over the church of God, and after briefly sketching the

baneful consequences which have resulted from Bishops and Councils, and civil Government usurping this power, he says:—'This, therefore, is absolutely denied by us, viz. *That any men, under any pretence or name soever, have any right or authority to constitute any new frame, or order of the church, to make any laws of their own for its rule or government,* that should oblige the disciples of Christ in point of conscience to their observation.' He shews fully and successfully, that the churches of Christ have laws to observe, and not laws to make; and that the assumption of an opposite principle and conduct is derogatory to the glory of Christ, to the perfection of Scripture, and inconsistent with the acknowledgment of the infallibility, faithfulness, and Divine authority of the apostles. He goes on to inquire into 'The continuation of a church state, and of churches, unto the end of the world, and the causes on which they depend;' and shews that they depend on the Father's grant of the kingdom to Christ—on the Saviour's promise to preserve his church to the end—on the continued existence of the word of Christ, and the communication of gifts from him. In regard to believers, it depends on their sense of duty, the instinct of the new creature, and the fact that it is only in churches they can attend to the will of Christ. He argues, therefore, that the idea of the continuance of the church depending on a regular succession of office-bearers from the apostles, is a baseless figment, as unnecessary to the existence of the church, as it is unsupported by Scripture, contrary to fact, and pernicious in its operation.

In chap. iv. he inquires into the special nature of the Gospel Church State appointed by Christ; which he thus defines:—'An especial society, or congregation of professed believers, joined together according to his mind, with their officers, guides, or rulers whom he hath appointed; which does, or may meet together for the celebration of all the ordinances of Divine worship, the professing or authoritatively proposing the doctrine of the gospel, with the exercise of the discipline prescribed by himself, to their own mutual edification, with the glory of Christ, in the preservation and propagation of his kingdom in the world.' Having thus defined it, he goes on to explain his definition more

particularly, concluding with asserting 'That to such a church, and *every one* of them, belongs of right all the privileges, promises, and power that Christ grants unto the church in this world.' He then proceeds to prove, that Christ hath appointed this church state of a *particular, or single congregation;* and secondly, that he hath appointed *no other church state* that is inconsistent with this, much less destructive of it.' These quotations must satisfy the reader, that Owen was not only an Independent, but a firm believer in the *jus divinum* of Independency. Comparing them with our statement of the principles of Independency in Chapter III. of this work, it will appear how far Dr. Owen held those sentiments; and, comparing them with his language in Eshcol, published in 1648, with his language to Cawdry, in 1657, with the language of the Savoy declaration, in 1658; and with what he says in his Theologoumena, in 1662, in his Catechism in 1667, in his Discourses on Christian Love, in 1673, it will be seen that his sentiments throughout were radically, and I may say verbally the same.

In supporting his views of the exclusive appointment of Congregational Church Government, he shews that it is suited to, and sufficient for, all the Scriptural ends of the Divine appointment of a church, and 'that it is in *Congregational Churches* alone that these ends can be done or observed.' He maintains that the very meaning of the words קהל and εκκλησια determines them to signify a particular congregation, which he argues at great length, from Matt. xviii. 17. in connexion with other passages. He maintains, in the third place, that 'All the churches instituted by the apostles were Congregational, and of no other sort.' Having amply illustrated these various positions, in a way that is familiar to all who are acquainted with this controversy, in the fifth chapter, he urges the precedent and example of the first churches, and endeavours to shew, 'that in no approved writers for the space of 200 years after Christ, is there any mention made of any other organical, visibly professing church, but that only which is Parochial or Congregational.'

This being dispatched, he returns to illustrate at greater length some of the sentiments previously thrown out. In

chap. vi. he shews 'that Congregational churches alone are suited to the ends of Christ in the institution of his church.' This being fully confirmed, the next chapter is occupied in proving that 'no other church state is of Divine institution; in which he denies that there is any such thing as national churches, or churches of office-bearers of any kind. The remaining part of the work is occupied in pointing out the duty of believers to join themselves in church fellowship—and what sort of churches they ought to join; and in shewing the impossibility of conscientiously joining the Parish Churches in England, because they consisted mostly of improper persons, required a reformation which they had no power to effect themselves, and involved the observation of many things not agreeable to the will of Christ.

The second part, or volume, of the work is divided into eleven chapters, in which he treats of the material of a church, its formal cause, its polity or discipline, officers and their duties, of the rule of a church and the duty of elders, of deacons, excommunication, and of the communion of churches. There is, in parts of this volume, a want of that rigid attention to method or order which sometimes occurs in the writings of Owen, and which occasions both repetition and confusion, and even an apparent want of consistency.

He establishes clearly a very important principle, that none but those who give evidence of being regenerated, or holy persons, ought to be received or counted fit members of visible churches, and that where this is wanting, the very essence of a church is lost. 'If the corruption of a church,' says he, 'as to the matter of it, be such as, that it is inconsistent with and overthroweth all that communion that ought to be among the members of the same church, in love without dissimulation; if the scandals and offences, which must of necessity abound in such churches, be really obstructive of edification; if the ways and walking of the generality of their members, be dishonourable to the gospel, and the profession of it, giving no representation of the holiness of Christ or his doctrine; if such churches *do not, cannot, will not* reform themselves, then it is the duty of every man who takes care of his own edification, and the future salvation of his soul, *peaceably to withdraw from the communion of*

such churches, and to join in such others, where all the ends of church societies, may in some measure be obtained.'

Two things in this volume have a particular claim on our attention: the Doctor's sentiments on the subject of ruling Elders, and of the communion of Churches; which have been supposed to be either peculiar, or a species of Presbyterianism. Were this the case, it would not follow, that either Independency or Presbytery would be right or wrong, as the truth on these subjects is entirely independent of Owen's sentiments or authority. But it would follow, that the Doctor was inconsistent with himself, as we presume we have alleged incontrovertible evidence, that he held all the great and fundamental principles of Independency. There is no room to allege any change of mind on his part, as the present volume is only a part of the former work on the same subject, and written nearly at the same time, though published, on account of his death, several years after. And, as the Doctor never hints, in the most remote manner, at any change of mind having taken place, we are bound to consider his sentiments to have been the same to the end of his life. In consequence of the quantity which he wrote, the rapidity with which he composed, the little attention which he paid to revising or correcting his works, and the multitude of words which he generally employed on every subject, he is at times liable to be misunderstood; and it would be an easy matter for a captious writer, or a contradiction-hunter, like Daniel Cawdry, to fasten the charge of inconsistency on a variety of sentiments in his numerous productions. Attention, however, to the scope of his writing, and a comparison of the parts together, will in general satisfy us, that little actual inconsistency or contradiction exists.

On the subject of Pastors or Elders, and the distinction between teaching and ruling Elders, one or two quotations will enable us to ascertain his real sentiments. He lays it down, as an established position, that the New Testament acknowledges no distinction of power, office, or authority in the pastoral office. ' In the whole New Testament, Bishops, and Presbyters, or Elders are every way the *same persons*, in the *same office*, have the *same function*, without distinction in *order or degree*.' This is a clear and decisive

statement, with which every thing else in the work must be made consistent. Again he says: 'These works of *teaching* and *ruling* may be distinct in several officers, namely, of teachers, and rulers; but to divide them in the same office of Pastors, that some Pastors should feed by *teaching only*, but have no right to rule by virtue of their office, and some should attend in exercise unto *rule only*, not esteeming themselves obliged to labour continually in feeding the flock, is almost to overthrow this office of Christ's designation, and to set up *two* in the room of it, of men's own projection.'

These passages clearly shew, that Dr. Owen considered the pastoral office as one, including both teaching and ruling. Now the principles and practice of Presbyterians make them two. In the Confession of Faith, under the head of Church Government, after the office of Pastor and Teacher is spoken of, there is a section designated 'Other Church Governors;' whose office it is 'to join with the Minister in the Government of the Church, which officers, Reformed Churches commonly call Elders.' According to this statement, which is confirmed by other chapters, there are three offices in every congregation, Pastors, Elders, and Deacons. This accordingly corresponds with the general fact. A Minister, Elders, and Deacons commonly existing in every regular congregation, and constituting the Session, or first court of inspection. These offices are held to be so distinct, that the Ministers alone are considered as Pastors or Clergymen, and the Elders as mere Laymen; for whom it would be as unlawful to preach, baptize, or dispense Divine ordinances, as for other members of the congregation. Whether this plan be Scriptural or not, I do not now inquire; but certainly it was not Dr. Owen's.

'I do acknowledge,' says he, 'that where a church is greatly increased, so as that there is a necessity of many Elders in it for its instruction and rule, that decency and order do require, that one of them do, in the management of all church affairs, *preside*. Whether the person that is so to preside, be directed to by being the first *converted* or first *ordained*, or on account of age, or of gifts and abilities; whether he continue for a *season* only, and then another be deputed to the same work, or *for his life*, are things in

themselves indifferent. I shall never oppose this *order*, but rather desire to see it in practice; viz. that particular churches were of such an extent, as necessarily to require *many Elders*, both teaching and ruling, for their instruction and government; and *among these Elders* one should be chosen by themselves, with the consent of the Church, not into a new *order*, not into a *degree of authority* above his brethren, but only into his part of the common work in a peculiar manner, which requires some kind of precedency. Hereby no new officer, no new order of officers, no new degree of power or authority is instituted in the Church; only the work and duty of it is cast into such an order, as the very light of nature doth require.'

The ground on which he here evidently rests the necessity and importance of a number of persons being associated in the same office, is the extent or number of the church. A sentiment, far from peculiar, among Independents, to Dr. Owen. It is equally clear, at the same time, that he considers them all as holding the same office, names, and authority; though with mutual consent acting more or less prominently in the several departments of it. It deserves to be noticed also, in connexion with considering his sentiments, that in his own church, in Bury Street, there were no ruling Elders; a proof that he did not consider them essential to the management of the church, or that he found it easier to maintain his theory than to reduce it to practice, by finding a number of persons suitably qualified for the office. To such persons, be they few or many, he ascribed no power or authority, as a body distinct from their brethren, or the church. 'The power of the Keys,' says he, 'as unto binding and loosing, and consequently as unto all other acts thence proceeding, is expressly granted to the *whole church*, Matt. xviii. 17, 18.' Which right he afterwards remarks, 'is exemplified in apostolical practice.'

He has a chapter on the office of Teaching Elders, in which he discusses various views of the subject; and in which he professes to think that it is 'of the same kind with that of the Pastor, though distinguished from it in degree.' After noticing the question whether there may be one or many officers, Pastors, or Elders in a church, he

says, 'Wherefore, let the state of the church be preserved, and kept unto its original constitution, *which is Congregational and no other;* and I do judge, that the order of the officers, which was so early in the primitive church, viz. of one Pastor or Bishop, in one church, assisted in rule and all holy ministrations, with many Elders, teaching or ruling only, do not so overthrow church order, as to render its rule or discipline useless.'

The amount of the whole of his reasonings seems to be, that in every numerous or fully organized church, there may, or ought to be an Eldership, or Presbytery of gifted persons; all holding substantially the same office, but some acting more statedly and distinctly in a particular department of it than the others. That this view of the subject is far from peculiar to Dr. Owen, those who are at all acquainted with the sentiments of Independents well know. In fact, Independency has no necessary connexion with the question respecting the number of office-bearers. An Independent church may have one, or it may have six Pastors; or it may have one Pastor and Teacher, and any number of Elders for managing other matters, and still act on the same principles.

The long chapter on ruling Elders must be explained consistently with the sentiments we have shewn to be contained in the former part of the work; otherwise the Doctor must not have clearly understood himself. In that chapter he seems to contend for a distinct office of ruling Elder, or for Elders who are called to rule and not to teach, and who 'had no interest in the pastoral, or ministerial office, as to the dispensation of the word and administration of the sacraments.' Let them reconcile these things who can. The Doctor himself did not, or could not act on these principles; nor do we believe they have ever been acted on in the manner, or to the extent he pleads for, by any churches, whether Independent or Presbyterian. This is not the place for discussing the propriety, or impropriety of any particular view of the subject; those who wish to do so, will easily find what can be said, in the numerous works which have been published on both sides of the controversy.

We pass on to his sentiments on the subject of the Communion of Churches. From his employing the term

synod, in the sense of council, or meeting for advice, and some other phraseology more usual among other bodies than Independents; it has been inferred that the Doctor was a believer in the Divine right of ecclesiastical courts, or meetings of church rulers, for the purpose of exercising authority over their respective churches. That such sentiments would be subversive of all his former views, as a Congregationalist, inconsistent with the language we have already quoted from this volume itself, and would place him in the strange predicament of seeking to build again the things he had destroyed, must be obvious. That the Doctor is not chargeable with these things, farther than some peculiarity of phraseology is concerned, will clearly appear from a few passages, in which we have printed in italics, the words which shew that he contended for no meetings of councils, but such as were perfectly consistent with the freedom and authority of every particular church.

He defines the Communion of Churches to be, 'Their consent, endeavour, and conjunction in and for the promotion of the edification of the Catholic Church, and therein their own, as they are parts and members of it.' To this definition, I presume every Independent will subscribe. He contends for the absolute equality, in respect of power or privilege, of all churches. Speaking of the Catholic Church, he says with great propriety, 'While Evangelical faith, holiness, obedience to the commands of Christ, and mutual love abide in any on the earth, there is the Catholic Church; and while they are professed, that Catholic Church is visible; other Catholic Church upon the earth, I believe none; nor any that needs other things to its constitution.'

When he comes to speak of outward acts of Communion among Churches, he refers them to two heads—'*Advice* and *Assistance*. These are evidently very different things from power or authority. 'Synods,' he says, 'are the meetings of divers churches by their messengers or delegates, to consult and determine of such things as are of common concern unto them all, by virtue of this communion which is exercised in them.' He then proceeds to state the grounds on which he conceives the necessity and use of them to rest. In the course of which he remarks, 'No Church, therefore, is so *Independent*, as that it can al-

ways, and in all cases, observe the duties it owes to the Lord Christ, and the Church Catholic, by all those powers which it is able to act in itself distinctly, without conjunction with others. And the Church which confines its duty to the *acts of its own assemblies,* cuts itself off from the external communion of the *Church Catholic;* nor will it be safe for any man to commit the conduct of his soul to such a church.'

This passage has been often quoted as the suffrage of Dr. Owen against Independency. How far it can be so, consistently with his sentiments, may be judged from his previous language and history. But to what does it come?—That the church which has no connexion with any other churches—which holds no correspondence with them—takes no interest in their affairs or circumstances—which refuses all co-operation with them, separates itself from the body of the people of God, and must fail in the discharge of many important duties; and, therefore, it cannot be safe to be connected with it. But who are the defenders of this species of Independency? Need I say, this is not the faith or the practice of modern, any more than of ancient Independents? Should I assert, that for every practical and important purpose, there is as much union and co-operation among them, as exist in any other body of professing Christians; and that these are not the less effective, because they are voluntary, I should not be afraid of confutation. What is the meaning of their local associations —of their meetings at ordinations—of their united support of academies—of their union for the support and diffusion of the gospel, both at home and abroad? If these are not the proofs, and the best fruits of union, let others shew them a more excellent way.

When we call the union of Independent Churches *voluntary,* we do not mean to say that they hold it to be *optional,* whether they shall have communion with other Churches, or as Dr. Owen expresses it, with the Church Catholic, on all proper occasions; these they acknowledge themselves bound to improve for this purpose as matter of *duty* to the great Head of the Church, and for the good of themselves and their brethren. Their only meaning is, that they acknowledge no human authority, whether in indivi-

duals or synods, whether by office or delegation. Dr. Owen has been represented, in the above passage, as making a singular concession to Presbyterianism, whereas he is expressing the genuine principle of Independency. The connexion to which he belonged, while he lived, and the state of it at the present day, is, to say the very least, as far removed from the insulated and selfish society he describes, as any denomination of Christians whatever.

After the Doctor has noticed some of the ends or uses of such meetings, he proceeds to speak of the persons who ought to constitute them. 'It must therefore be affirmed,' he says, 'that no persons, by virtue of any office merely, have right to be members of any *Ecclesiastical Synods* as such. Neither is there either example or reason, to give colour to any such pretence. For their is *no office-power to be exerted in such synods as such, neither conjunctly by all the members of them, nor singly by any of them.*' Again, referring to the meeting at Jerusalem, of which we have an account in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, he says, 'The Church of Antioch chose and sent messengers of their own number, to *advise* with the Apostles and Elders of the Church at Jerusalem; at which *consultation* the members of the *Church also were present. And this is the whole of the nature and use of Ecclesiastical synods.*' Nothing can shew more evidently than this language, that the Doctor considered them entirely as voluntary meetings of the Churches, for the purpose of advice, consultation, and co-operation about matters of common concern. He invests them with no power over the churches, or their office-bearers, farther than that of advice, or of explaining and persuading to obey the will of Christ.

As an antidote to any use that might be made of his sentiments, or authority on this subject, the following passage will evince how little faith he himself had in the good such meetings had done, how jealous Christians ought to be of them; and how little authority he was disposed to ascribe to them. 'Hence nothing is more to be feared, especially in a state of the Church wherein it is declining in faith, worship, and holiness, than synods, according to the usual way of their calling and convention, where these things are absent. For they have already been *the principal*

means of leading on and justifying all the Apostasy which Churches have fallen into. For never was there yet a synod of that nature, which did not confirm all the errors and superstitions which had in common practice entered into the Church, and opened a door to a progress in them; nor was ever the pretence of any of them for outward reformation. The *authority* of a synod determining articles of faith!—Constituting orders and decrees for the conscientious observance of things of their own appointment, to be submitted to and obeyed on the reason of that *authority* under *the penalty of excommunication;* and the trouble by custom and tyranny thereto annexed, or acted in a way *of jurisdiction over Churches or persons, is a mere human invention, for which nothing can be pleaded but prescription from the fourth century of the Church, when the progress of the fatal apostasy became visible.*"[h]

Those who claim the suffrage of Owen in support of Ecclesiastical authority, are now made quite welcome to it. It must be very evident what he thought of it, how far he would himself have submitted to it, or have recommended to others to acknowledge it. There is a vast difference between the unity of love—the co-operation of voluntary agreement; and the union of mere systematic arrangement;—between application for advice, and the interference of uncalled-for authority;—between a simple reference to brethren of reputation, for counsel and assistance in cases of difficulty, which may occur either among individuals or churches; and the multiplied forms, regular gradations, and interminable appeals of Ecclesiastical courts. Those who believe Owen to have been favourable to the latter, must have paid little attention to his sentiments or history. Those who believe modern Independents to be inimical to the former, must know as little about them. Apart from some of the language, in which it was customary for Owen to clothe his theological conceptions, we believe there are few Independents who do not hold substantially the same sentiments on the subject we have now so fully stated. That some of his arguments they may doubt, and some of his explanations of Scripture they would call in question, are only what might be remarked on many other

[h] Works, vol. xx. p. 599.

subjects as well as this; and will ever be found where men are taught to acknowledge no authority in religion, but that of Christ, as exhibited in the revelation of his will.

An attempt at answering a portion of this work on the part of the Episcopalians, was made by Edmund Elys, son of a clergyman in Devonshire, under the title of 'Animadversions upon some passages in a book entitled, "The true nature of the Gospel Church, by J. Owen."' 8vo. 1690. The oblivion into which it has sunk, is a proof how little impression it must have made.

The next work of our indefatigable author's pen is, 'A Humble Testimony to the Goodness and Severity of God, in his dealing with Sinful Churches and Nations.' 1681.[i] It is the substance of some discourses on Luke xiii. 1—5. The period was alarming. The dissolution of the parliament, called at Oxford, within seven days of its meeting—the evident determination of the Court to support the popish succession in the person of the Duke of York—and the oppressive measures against the Dissenters, which were still continued and increased, produced much alarm and suffering in the country. 'On various accounts,' says the Doctor, 'there are continual apprehensions of public calamities, and all men's thoughts are exercised about the ways of deliverance from them. But, as they fix on various and opposite means for this end, the conflict of their counsels and designs increaseth our danger, and is likely to prove our ruin.'[k] He notices very properly, the interest that ministers ought to feel, not only that their congregations prosper during their own lives; but that they might be preserved for future generations: and that it is a great mistake to suppose, a church can be injured only by heresy, tyranny, and false worship; while 'a worldly corrupt conversation in the generality of its members may be no less ruinous.' The Testimony contains much of that practical wisdom, which the Doctor had acquired from his long and deep study of the word of God, and from his extensive experience in the ways of Providence. He very cautiously avoids referring to the conduct of the Court, and the measures of Government; being aware how ready they were to lay hold on all who took notice of their proceed-

[i] Works, vol. xiv. p. 475. [k] Introduction.

ings, and how little good was likely to result from political allusions on his part, and interference on theirs.

The Testimony was followed by 'The Grace and Duty of being Spiritually Minded.' 4to. 1681.[1] This is one of the most valuable and deservedly popular of all the Doctor's writings. It was originally the subject of his private meditations, during a time in which he was entirely unfitted for doing any thing for the edification of others, and little expecting he should be able to do more in this world. After he obtained a partial recovery, he delivered the substance of these meditations to his own congregation, partly influenced by the advantage he had himself derived from the subject, and partly from considering it suitable to the circumstances of his people. The same considerations induced him to publish it for the benefit of others. If Owen thought the world too keenly pursued in his time, which was probably the case, and that Christians then stood much in need of a powerful counteractive to its baneful influence; what would he have thought of the state of things now, when the spirit of speculation, the love of grandeur, and conformity to the world, seem to be the snares which are entangling and trying all them that dwell upon the earth? The only remedy, we apprehend, is that which he proposed and exemplified. Scriptural spirituality will enable to bear the perplexities and pressure of distress, and to resist the elations and other unholy tendencies of prosperity and honour. This state of mind, which is the opposite of earthliness, as well as of carnality; which is the result of the peculiar and habitual influence of the Spirit of Christ; which consists in the constant exercise of faith on the Divine testimony, of hope in the certain promises of the gospel, and of delightful fellowship, with the Father and with his dear Son, is admirably described by Owen. This is the life, which every Christian is called to cultivate, and without which, no name or profession is of any importance. Its operations may be manifested, and its felicities enjoyed in a palace or in a cottage. It is the name which only he who receives it knows,—the water of life which proceedeth from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and of which, he who drinks never thirsts again for worldly or sensual hap-

[1] Works, vol. xiii. p. 207.

piness. It is, in a word, that immortal existence, which is begun on earth, and perfected in heaven. As Owen approached nearer and nearer to 'the bosom of his Father and his God,' he appears to have improved in spirituality of mind himself, and in his desire to impart a relish for it to others. His spirit was soon to ascend to the brightness of that eternal love and glory on which it had long delighted to gaze; and before its departure, it reflected a portion of its heaven-derived lustre for the benefit of his brethren left behind. May his mantle rest upon them, and in the enjoyment of a double portion of his spirit, may they experience that the Lord God of Owen is still the same; and that He is able to do for his people infinitely beyond what they can ask or think!

On the 12th of April, 1682, the Doctor lost his only surviving daughter, Mrs. Kennington. It appears that she had been under the necessity of separating from her husband, and returning to her father's house. She had been received into the church, in March, 1674; and as her illness had been protracted, there is reason to believe that there was hope in her death.

In 1683, he published a quarto pamphlet of 40 pages, 'A Brief and Impartial Account of the Protestant Religion; its present state in the world; its strength and weakness,' &c.[m] In this tract he points out what he conceives to be the grounds of Protestantism as contained in the Bible; examines the danger to which it was exposed, from a general defection, from the operation of force, or from a reconciliation with Rome. While he intimates his fears from these causes, he balances them by other grounds of confidence; such as—the honour of Christ to maintain his cause, the remnant of his people found among the nations, and the magnanimous spirit by which they were actuated. He concludes by expressing his full conviction that it would ultimately and universally triumph.

The last work of his pen, was, his 'Meditations and Discourses on the glory of Christ,'[n] which were committed to the press on the day in which he died. They consist of two parts: the first treats of the Person, Office, and Grace of Christ; the second, which did not appear till 1691, con-

[m] Works. vol. xvii. p. 605. [n] Ibid. vol. xii. p. 341.

sists of the application of the truths contained in the former, to sinners and declining believers. Between this publication, and the 'Dying Thoughts' of Baxter, a considerable similarity subsists. Whatever were the differences between these eminent men on minor points, there was an intimate union between them, in spirituality of affections, in deadness to the world, and in longing aspirations after that heavenly felicity, so large a portion of which they both enjoyed and diffused on earth. It has been remarked, that disputants will often agree in their prayers, when they differ in their writings.—Christians may differ while they live; but will generally agree in their feelings and sentiments towards each other in the near prospect of death. Eternity, when closely viewed, must materially affect our estimate of the transactions of time; and one thing alone can render the prospect of entering it, delightful to the mind. The glory of Christ, like that of the sun, increases in splendour as we advance upon it. It discovers increasingly the meanness and pollution of our earthly residence, and sheds a lustre over the 'inheritance of the saints in light,' which renders it infinitely attractive. The exercise of faith, hope, and love, when long directed towards heavenly things, acquires the strength and influence of habit; futurity, often contemplated, is felt to be present; and invisible things acquire a form and consistency in the mind. It does not indeed appear what we shall be; but as we become weaned from this sinful world, and feel that our life is hid with Christ in God, our earnest of heavenly happiness not only becomes more sure, but is better understood, and more abundant. The love of life loses its power, the fear of death diminishes; knowledge ripens to perfection, and the song of victory begins to be sung on the borders of the tomb. In this life, Christians suffer immense loss from not meditating on the person and glory of Christ, as they ought to do. It is a mistake to suppose, that this will be easy on a death bed, if the mind has not been previously tutored to it. It is a subject which ought to become increasingly familiar, and increasingly delightful. If it shall constitute the perfection and employment of heaven, it ought surely to be the subject of chief regard on earth. The more that it is so, the more will the conduct be marked

with the decision of Christianity, and the more will the mind be imbued by its spirit; till, from sipping of the streams, we rise to the full enjoyment of the ever-living and infinite fountain of heavenly joy. 'Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now we know in part; but then shall we know even as we are known.'

Besides all the works we have noticed, Owen was the author of several other productions, which appeared at distant intervals, after his death. He also wrote a great number of prefaces, or commendatory epistles to the works of other writers. Of all these some account, as far as they are known to me, will be found in the Appendix. To have introduced them here, would have diverted us too long from the concluding scenes of his earthly career, to which we must now attend.

The health of Dr. Owen appears to have been much broken for several years before his death. His intense and unwearied application, the fruits of which appear in his numerous and elaborate writings, and his anxious solicitude respecting the affairs of his Master's kingdom, must have destroyed the vigour of any constitution. He was severely afflicted with the stone, that painful and common accompaniment of a studious life. To this was added asthma, a complaint peculiarly unfavourable to public speaking. These disorders frequently confined him to his chamber; but though they often prevented him from preaching, they must have interfered little with his writing, otherwise so many works could not have been composed during the last years of his life.

While tried by these painful afflictions, he experienced much sympathy from his Christian friends. He had frequent invitations to the country residences of persons of quality, and particularly to that of Lord Wharton, at Woburn, in Buckinghamshire. While occasionally at the seat of this benevolent and Christian nobleman, he was often visited by persons of rank, and enjoyed the company of many of his Christian brethren in the ministry, who resorted thither. From his house, he wrote, during one of his severe attacks, a letter to the Church, so characteristic of the man, so suitable to the circumstances of the times

and of his people, that the reader will be gratified by finding it entire at the end of the volume.

His infirmities rendering a fixed residence in the country necessary, he took a house at Kensington, where he lived for some time. During this period, an accident occurred which shews the state of the times, and the hardships to which Dissenters were then exposed. On going one day from Kensington to London, his carriage was seized by two informers. This must have been exceedingly painful to the Doctor at any time, but especially when in a state of health ill capable of bearing the violent excitement of such an interference, and its probable consequences. It providentially happened, however, that Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey, a justice of the peace, was passing at the time, who seeing a carriage stopped, and a mob collected, inquired into the matter. He ordered the informers and Dr. Owen to meet him at a justice's house in Bloomsbury square, on another day, when the cause should be tried. In the mean time the Doctor was discharged; and when the meeting took place, it was found that the informers had acted so illegally, that they were severely reprimanded, and the business dismissed.

In the last year of his life, when he was probably thinking of another world, rather than of the politics of this, a vile attempt was made to involve him, and some of the other eminent Non-conformists, in the Rye-house plot. Mr. Mead, Mr. Griffiths, and Mr. Carstairs, were charged with meditating the assassination of the King and the Duke of York! Several distinguished individuals, among whom was the amiable and patriotic Lord Russel, were sacrificed for their supposed connexion with this business. The ministers, however, seem to have been free from any other blame than that of conversing freely with each other, about what ought to be done in the event of things coming to a crisis.° The testimony of Mr. Carstairs, who was more connected with the politics of the country than any of the other ministers, and who suffered most severely and unjustly on account of this sham plot, is full and explicit to the innocence of the Dissenters. 'I should be guilty,' he

° Pierce's Vindication of the Dissenters, pp. 253. 258.

says, 'of the most horrid injustice, if I should accuse any of the worthy gentlemen of my own country, that were my fellow prisoners, or any of the *English Dissenting ministers*, of having the least knowledge of, or concern in the abominable assassination of the King or his brother; for I did then, as I do now, abhor such practices, nor can I, to this hour, tell really what was in that matter, that makes such a noise.'[p] Indeed, there can scarcely be a doubt, that it was entirely a contrivance of the court, to involve the friends of religion and liberty in disgrace; and to gain some of its own iniquitous ends. The business is of too infamous a nature, to induce the smallest suspicion that men of religious character or honour could be engaged in it.

From Kensington, the Doctor removed to Ealing, a few miles farther into the country, where he had some property and a house of his own; and where he was destined to finish his course. His state of mind in the prospect of eternity, might be inferred from his work on spiritual mindedness, and his meditations on the glory of Christ; so that without any farther evidence we might be convinced of the falseness of Anthony Wood's assertion, 'That he did very unwillingly lay down his head and die.'[q] But we are not dependent entirely on the evidence of these works, for our estimate of the Doctor's feelings in this interesting situation. The following letter, dictated the day before he died, to his intimate friend, Charles Fleetwood, discovers the state of his mind to have been, not only composed, but highly animated by the glorious hope of eternal life.

'Although I am not able to write one word myself; yet I am very desirous to speak one word more to you in this world, and do it by the hand of my wife. The continuance of your entire kindness, knowing what it is accompanied with, is not only greatly valued by me, but will be a refreshment to me, as it is even in my dying hour. I am going to him whom my soul has loved, or rather who has loved me, with an everlasting love, which is the whole ground of all my consolation. The passage is very irksome and wearisome, through strong pains of various sorts, which are all issued in an intermitting fever. All things were provided to carry me to London to-day, according to the advice of my

[p] Wodrow's Hist. vol. ii. p. 388. [q] Athen. Ox. vol. iii. p. 564.

physicians; but we are all disappointed by my utter disability to undertake the journey. I am leaving the ship of the church in a storm; but while the great Pilot is in it, the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable. Live, and pray, and hope, and wait patiently, and do not despond; the promise stands invincible, that he will never leave us nor forsake us. I am greatly afflicted at the distempers of your dear lady; the good Lord stand by her, and support and deliver her. My affectionate respects to her, and the rest of your relations, who are so dear to me in the Lord. Remember your dying friend with all fervency; I rest upon it that you do so, and am your's entirely.'

This letter exhibits the ground of the Doctor's hope—the tranquillity of his mind—the humility of his disposition—his interest in the afflictions of the church, but confidence in her security—his attachment to his friends, and the pleasure which he derived from the fellowship of their kindness and prayers. It is just such a letter as we might have expected, from the preceding life and character of the writer.

His sufferings, previously to his death, appear to have been uncommonly severe, arising from the natural strength of his constitution, and the complication of his maladies. But the truth, which he had long preached to the edification and comfort of many, and in defence of which he had written so much and so well, proved fully adequate, not only to support him, but to make him triumph in the prospect of eternity. On the morning of the day on which he died, Mr. William Payne, an eminent tutor and Dissenting minister, at Saffron Waldon, in Essex, who had been intrusted with the publication of his Meditations on the glory of Christ, called to take his leave, and to inform him, that he had just been putting that work to the press. 'I am glad to hear it,' said the dying Christian, and lifting up his hands and eyes, as if transported with enjoyment, exclaimed—'But O! brother Payne! the long wished for day is come at last, in which I shall see that glory in another manner than I have ever done, or was capable of doing in this world.' This exclamation reminds us of the beautiful language which Cicero puts into the mouth of the elder Cato; but which have a very different emphasis in the mouth of a dying saint, from what they have in that of a heathen phi-

losopher. 'O praeclarum diem, cum ad illud divinum animorum concilium coetumque proficiscar, cumque ex hac turba et colluvione discedam! proficiscar enim non ad eos solum viros, de quibus ante dixi; sed etiam ad Catonem meum,' &c.[r] It was not, however, the prospect of seeing a Cato, though that Cato was a beloved son; or a Paul, though that Paul was an apostle, that animated the hopes of Owen; but the prospect of beholding him who once died for the guilty, who is the sum of all perfection; and the sight of whom imparts to all who enjoy it immortal happiness, and heavenly purity. To him, death would be a deliverance from the burden of sin, from the anxieties and cares which had long disturbed his repose, and from those excruciating pains of body, which had been the long forerunners of dissolution. It would also be, what is more than all the rest, absence from the body, to be present with the Lord.

His death took place on the twenty-fourth of August, one thousand six hundred and eighty-three, the anniversary of the celebrated Bartholomew ejection, and in the sixty-seventh year of his age. He was speechless for several hours before; but shewed, by the lifting up of his eyes and hands with great devotion, that he retained the use of his mental faculties, and his devotional feelings to the last. He was attended by Dr. Cox and Dr., afterwards Sir, Edmund King, who assigned a physical reason for the extreme severity of his last agonies. 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace!'—'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord—they rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.'

From Ealing, where he died, his body was conveyed to a house in St. James's, where it lay some time. On the fourth of September, it was conveyed to Bunhill-fields, attended by the carriages of sixty-seven noblemen and gentlemen; besides many mourning coaches and persons on horseback. Such a testimony to the memory of a man, who died destitute of court and of church favour; who had been often abused by the sycophants of tyranny, and the enemies of religion, and at a time when it was dangerous to take part with the persecuted Non-conformists, was

[r] Cic. De Senectute.

equally honourable to the dead and the living. He was doubtless dear to many, whom he had instructed by his preaching, and comforted by his writings. They must have sorrowed over the grave which closed upon the remains of a valuable and most devoted servant of Christ; but their sorrow would be mingled with joy, when they reflected on his deliverance, and indulged the sure and certain hope of his resurrection to eternal life. He indeed left the church in a storm, when there were few, comparatively, who cared for her state; but he entered into rest, and she, in a few years, obtained deliverance and repose. How would he have exulted, had he lived till the Revolution, and enjoyed for a little the happy effects of that long and arduous struggle, in which the country had been engaged, and in which he and his brethren bore so prominent a part! They were honoured to sustain the burden and heat of the day, while we repose with comfort in the shade. They fought the battle, and we reap the fruit of the victory. They, however, will have their due reward, when the reproach of the world, and the abuse of party prejudice, will be for ever destroyed by the applauding approbation of the righteous judge.

His death was improved to the church on the Lord's day after the funeral, by his brother and colleague, Mr. Clarkson, from Philippians iii. 21.—'Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' It is a short, but consolatory discourse. He does not enter largely into the Doctor's character, and gives nothing of his history. The last paragraph is solemn and affecting, and must have sensibly touched the church, 'His death falleth heaviest and most directly upon this congregation. We had a light in this candlestick, which did not only enlighten the room, but gave light to others far and near: but it is put out. We did not sufficiently value it; I wish I might not say, that our sins have put it out. We had a special honour and ornament, such as other churches would much prize; but the crown has fallen from our heads, yea, may I not add, "Woe unto us, for we have sinned." We have lost an excellent pilot, and lost him when a fierce storm is coming on us. I dread the consequences, considering the weakness of those who are

left at the helm. If we are not sensible of it, it is because our blindness is great. Let us beg of God, that he would prevent what this threatens us with, and that he would make up this loss, or that it may be repaired. And let us pray in the last words of this dying person to me—"That the Lord would double his spirit upon us, that he would not remember against us former iniquities; but that his tender mercies may speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low."'

By his Will, he left the estate of Eaton, in Berkshire, to his wife during her life. Upon her death, that estate and another at Stadham, were devised to his brother Henry Owen, (who, however, died before himself,) or his son Henry, who, I suppose, succeeded to both. Among the legacies are twenty pounds to John Collins, the pastor of a respectable Independent church in London; five pounds a-piece to Mr. David Clarkson, Mr. Robert Ferguson, and Mr. Isaac Loafs; and thirty pounds to one female servant, and twenty to another, who had attended him during his illness.[s]

His Library was sold in May, 1684, by Millington, one of the earliest of our book auctioneers.[t] Considering the Doctor's taste as a reader, his age as a minister, and his circumstances as a man, his library, in all probability, would be both extensive and valuable. He had become the possessor of the Greek and Latin MSS. which had belonged to Patrick Young, better known by his Latin name Junius: one of the most celebrated Greek scholars of his time, who had been keeper of the Royal Library, at St. James's, and the author and editor of several learned works.'[u]

A monument of free stone was erected over the vault in

[s] Copy of the Doctor's Will.—Had there been any thing of importance in the Will, besides what I have noticed, I would have inserted it entire in the Appendix; but it is very short, and contains nothing that would interest the reader.

[t] Nichol's Lit. Anec. vol. iv. p. 29.

[u] Wood's Fasti. vol. i. pp. 793, 794. The Libraries of many of the Dissenting ministers of this period, were both extensive and valuable. Dr. Lazarus Seaman's Library, the first that was sold by auction, brought £700. The half of Dr. Goodwin's Library, which was burnt, was valued at £500. Dr. Jacomb's sold for £1300. The collection of Dr. Bates was bought by Dr. Williams, for £500, or £600, to lay the foundation of the valuable library now in Red Cross Street. Dr. Evans' Library, in the beginning of last century, contained 10,000 volumes. It is probable Dr. Owen's was not inferior to some of these.

Bunhill fields, where his body was laid, on which the following Latin Epitaph, drawn up by his old friend Mr. Thomas Gilbert, was inscribed, and which still remains in fine preservation.

JOHANNES OWEN, S. T. P.
Agro Oxoniensi Oriundus;
Patre insigni Theologo Theologus ipse Insignior;
Et seculi hujus Insignissimis annumerandus:
Communibus Humaniorum Literarum Suppetiis,
Mensura parum Communi, Instructus;
Omnibus, quasi bene Ordinata Ancillarum Serie,
Ab illo jussis suæ Famulari Theologiæ:
Theologiæ Polemicæ, Practicæ, et quam vocant Casuum
(Harum enim Omnium, quæ magis sua habenda erat, ambigitur)
In illa, Viribus plusquam Herculeis, serpentibus tribus,
Arminio, Socino, Cano, Venenosa Strinxit guttura:
In ista suo prior, ad verbi Amussim, Expertus Pectore,
Universam Sp. Scti. Œconomiam Aliis tradidit:
Et, missis Cæteris, Coluit ipse, Sensitque,
Beatam quam scripsit, cum Deo Communionem,
In terris Viator comprehensori in cælis proximus:
In Casuum Theologia, Singulis Oraculi instar habitus;
Quibus Opus erat, et copia, Consulendi;
Scriba ad Regnum Cælorum usquequoque institutus;
Multis privatos intra Parietes, a Suggesto Pluribus,
A Prelo omnibus, ad eundem scopum collineantibus,
Pura Doctrinæ Evangelicæ Lampas Præluxit;
Et sensim, non sine aliorum, suoque sensu,
Sic prælucendo Periit,
Assiduis Infirmitatibus Obsiti,
Morbis Creberrimis Impetiti,
Durisque Laboribus potissimum Attriti, Corporis,
(Fabricæ, donec ita Quassatæ, Spectabilis) Ruinas,
Deo ultra Fruendi Cupida, Deseruit;
Die, a Terrenis Potestatibus, Plurimis facto Fatali;
Illi, A Cœlesti Numine, felici reddito;
Mensis Scilicet Augusti XXIV° Anno a Partu Virgineo.
M.DC.LXXXIII° Ætat. LXVII°.*

* *Translaton.*—JOHN OWEN, D.D. born in the county of Oxford, the son of an eminent Minister, himself more eminent, and worthy to be enrolled among the first Divines of the age. Furnished with human literature in all its kinds, and in all its degrees, he called forth all his knowledge in an orderly train to serve the interests of Religion, and minister in the Sanctuary of his God. In Divinity, practic, polemic, and casuistical, he excelled others, and was in all equal to himself. The Arminian, Socinian, and Popish errors, those Hydras, whose contaminated breath, and deadly poison infested the church, be, with more than Herculean labour, repulsed, vanquished, and destroyed. The whole economy of redeeming grace, revealed and applied by the Holy Spirit, he deeply investigated and communicated to others; having first felt its divine energy, according to its draught in the Holy Scriptures, transfused into his own bosom. Superior to all terrene pursuits, he constantly

Dr. Owen was tall in stature, and toward the latter part of his life inclined to stoop. He had a grave majestic countenance; but the expression was sweet rather than austere. His appearance and deportment were those of a gentleman, and therefore much suited to the situations which he was called to fill. Several portraits of him have been executed, all of which, though done at different periods of his life, exhibit a considerable resemblance to each other. The engraving given in the first edition of Palmer's Non-conformist's Memorial, appears to be from the earliest painting. It is said to be taken from an original picture in the possession of the Rev. Dr. Gifford; and is now in the Library of the Baptist Academy at Bristol. There is a very fine engraving by White, which is copied by Vertue, and prefixed to the folio collection of his Sermons and Tracts, published in 1721. The painting or drawing from which this print was taken, must have been done toward the latter part of the Doctor's life. The plate is a large oval, in which he is represented in his library, and supporting his gown with his left hand. Round the margin of the plate is engraved, 'Joannes Owen, S. T. P. Decan Æd. Chr. et per Quinquenn. Vice Canc. Oxon.' In a scroll above the oval, 'Queramus Superna,' is inscribed; in a small tablet at the bottom, his arms are inserted, and on a square pedestal supporting the whole, the following lines occur:—

Umbra refert fragiles, dederunt quas cura dolorque
Reliquias, studiis assiduusque labor
Mentem humilem sacri servantem Limina veri
Votis supplicibus, qui dedit, ille vidit.

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cherished, and largely experienced, that blissful communion with Deity, he so admirably describes in his writings. While on the road to Heaven his elevated mind almost comprehended its full glories and joys. When he was consulted on cases of conscience his resolutions contained the wisdom of an Oracle. He was a scribe every way instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. In conversation, he held up to *many*, in his public discourses, to *more*, in his publications from the press, to *all*, who were set out for the celestial *Zion*, the effulgent lamp of evangelical truth to guide their steps to immortal glory. While he was thus diffusing his divine light, with his own inward sensations, and the observations of his afflicted friends, his earthly tabernacle gradually decayed, till at length his deeply sanctified soul longing for the fruition of its God, quitted the body. In younger age a most comely and majestic form; but in the latter stages of life, depressed by constant infirmities, emaciated with frequent diseases, and above all crushed under the weight of intense and unremitting studies, it became an incommodious mansion for the vigorous exertions of the spirit in the service of its God. He left the world on a day, dreadful to the Church by the cruelties of men, but blissful to himself by the plaudits of his God, August 24, 1683, aged 67.—*Translated by Dr. Gibbons.*

Of these lines, we have an elegant translation from the pen of Dr. Watts; who speaks of them with great approbation, and as the production of Owen himself.

> This shadow shews the frail remains
> Of sickness care and studious pains.
> The mind in humble posture waits
> At sacred truth's celestial gates,
> And keeps those bounds with holy fear,
> While he that gave it sees it there.[y]

The engraving prefixed to this work, is from a very fine painting, done in 1656, when the Doctor was Vice-Chancellor, and in the fortieth year of his age. Of the painter or its history nothing is known; but the proprietor has kindly allowed it to be used for these Memoirs, as he had before to Mr. Palmer, for the second edition of the Non-conformist's Memorial. The fac-simile of Owen's hand writing is taken from a letter to Baxter, written in 1668, now in the Red Cross Street library.

From the materials contained in the preceding part of this volume, and from the numerous works of Dr. Owen, the reader might safely be left to form his own estimate of his general character. But as our discussions have frequently taken a considerable range, an attempt to bring together the leading features of his character, as a Christian, as a minister of the gospel, and as a writer, will form a suitable conclusion and improvement of the whole.

One of the first things which appears in Owen's religious history, and which constituted a prominent feature in his character through life, is his recognition of the supreme authority of the word of God. This led him at an early period, to abandon all hope and desire to rise in the Episcopal hierarchy, and to take part with the despised and persecuted Puritans. The same principle induced him afterwards to adopt the sentiments of the Independents, then struggling for existence. It was this, which made him maintain his adherence to that body through all its various fortunes, and to resist with equal perseverance and steadiness every inducement to leave it, whether arising from the allurements of preferment, or the temptations of adversity. 'To the Law and the Testimony,' he uniformly bowed with humble and cheerful subjection. Where they

[y] Watts' Works, Parson's Edit. vol. ii. p. 389.

pointed the way, he felt it his duty to follow; what they called him to bear, he willingly sustained. The path was often rugged, and the burden heavy; but the love of Christ always smoothed the one, and enabled to bear the other. With a conscience alive to every precept of the sacred word, and a heart filled with gratitude to its Divine author, all things were felt to be easy; and he experienced, what all who imitate his conduct will find, that the path of duty, even when it leads through tribulation, is the path of safety and comfort.

With conscientious obedience was associated deep humility of disposition. Possessed of eminent talents, and great enlargement of mind; placed in the most dignified and often envied situations; consulted, applauded, and courted by authority, learning, and rank—he could not be altogether unconscious of his own superiority. Yet this very rarely appears. There was little of pride or overbearing in his manner. The tendency of his talents and honours to elate him, was counteracted by his deep insight into the character of God, and the interior of human nature. He had been completely humbled by the convictions of the Divine law, and his knowledge of the gospel deepened his impressions of the malignity of sin, and the deceitfulness of the heart. Instead of comparing himself with others, he always examined his motives and actions by the standard of an unalterable and perfect rule. Conscious of innumerable imperfections which were unperceived by men, he walked before God, as a sinner, constantly dependent on sovereign mercy to cover his transgressions, and on gracious influence to perfect his obedience. 'What have I, that I have not received,' is a sentiment which he seems constantly to have carried in his mind.

The account given of his private manners, corresponds with the idea we form of him from his writings. He was very affable and courteous, familiar and sociable; the meanest persons found easy access to his conversation and friendship. He was facetious and pleasant in his common discourse, but with sobriety and measure. He was a great master of his passions, especially that of anger; of a serene and even temper, neither elated with honour, credit, friends,

or estate; and not easily depressed with troubles and difficulties.[z]

He combined, in a manner worthy of imitation, liberal love to all the people of God, with firmness and attachment to his own peculiar sentiments. He walked according to the light which he had himself received, and loved those who minded the same things; but his benedictions extended to all the true Israel of God. He was a devoted friend to truth; but a lover of many who did not see every part of it as he did: while he only pitied and prayed for those who opposed it. Like Melancthon, he contended for unity in those truths which are necessary to be believed, for liberty in those things which God hath left free, and for love to all who bear the image of Christ. He was of great moderation in his judgment, willing to think the best of all men as far as he could: not censorious, but a lover of piety wherever it was exhibited; not limiting Christianity to any one party, and ever endeavouring to promote it among men of all professions. Those who wish to cultivate the diffusive charities of Christianity, and to be 'lovers of all good men,' would do well to imbibe his spirit, and to study his character: and those who suppose all principled attachment to distinctive sentiments and practices must be narrow-minded bigotry, are referred to the conduct of Owen for the reproof of their ignorance and folly. No man could exhibit more of the blandness of affection to those who differed from him on minor points; and no man could more sternly resist all interference with his own sentiments, or encroachments on his own liberty. To grant to others the same right which we exercise ourselves, is more commonly acknowledged to be equitable in principle, than generally exemplified in practice.

Unwearied diligence in the business of the Christian profession, is another distinguishing trait in the life of Owen. He was a passionate lover of knowledge, especially of Divine truth. He pursued it unweariedly through painful and wasting studies; which impaired his health and strength, and brought upon him those distempers which issued in his death. Some blamed him for this, as a sort of intemperance; but it is, says Mr. Clarkson, the most

[z] Memoirs, p. 33.

excusable of any, and looks like a voluntary martyrdom.[a] His laborious diligence appeared in his varied learning, in his preaching, in his writings, and in his numerous and diversified labours. Idleness must have been utterly unknown to him. Every moment of his time was filled up in obedience to the Divine injunction, 'whatsoever thy hands find to do, do it with thy might.' In the acquisition and diffusion of knowledge, he found a large portion of his earthly reward.

But that which appears most conspicuous in the character of Owen, is the deep spiritual tone of his mind. To this, all the other qualities in his temper, and every other attainment must be made to bow. The grand ingredient in his practical and experimental writings, is spirituality. In this he was superior to most men of his own age, and few comparatively since, have arrived at the measure of his spiritual stature. His eminence in this grace, or rather combination of the graces of the Spirit, deserves the more attention, when we reflect on the circumstances of his life. He was no ascetic, living afar from the haunts of men, and conversing in solitude with himself, and with God. Nor did he spend his days in village labours, amidst a rustic population, 'far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife.' He did not live, when 'the churches had rest and were edified,' or when the olive branch of peace was suspended over the land. He did not study how he might most quietly creep through the world, and obtain an unperceived dismission from its ills. His circumstances, and 'manner of life,' were the very reverse of these. He mixed much with the world, moved even among the great of the earth, and often stood before the principalities and powers of the land. Many of his best days were spent amidst the noise of camps, the bickerings of party, and the heat of controversy. His country was convulsed with intestine wars, and religious animosities; and the churches of Christ either agitated by 'divers and strange doctrines,' or called to endure 'a great fight of afflictions.' In all these circumstances, the soul of Owen remained unmoved; 'in the land of peace, and in the swellings of Jordan,' he maintained an undeviating spiritual career. Superior to the influence of

[a] Funeral Sermon.

external things, his pursuits and feelings often exhibit an extraordinary contrast with his situation. While governing the contending spirits of Oxford, conflicting with the turbulent elements of the commonwealth, and discussing the intricacies of the Arminian and Socinian debates, he wrote on the Mortification of Sin, and on Communion with God. While struggling with oppression, and sometimes concealing himself for safety, he produced his Exposition of the 130th Psalm, and his work on the Hebrews. When racked with the stone, and 'in deaths oft,' he composed his Defence of Evangelical Churches, and his Meditations on the Glory of Christ. The change of subject, and of circumstances, appear to have effected little change on his spirits, or on the state of his mind.

The secret of this enviable attainment is to be found in the extraordinary measure of Divine influence which he enjoyed. This produced a life of faith, of self-denial, and of heavenly tranquillity. When he describes the mortification of sin, it was what he himself daily practised. When he exhibits the nature and excellences of communion with God, we have a view of his own enjoyments. When he enforces the grace and duty of spiritual-mindedness, he illustrates that which he daily loved and sought. His mouth spoke from the abundance of his heart, and that which he had tasted and felt himself, he was desirous of communicating to others. 'He set the Lord always before him;' which delivered him from the fear of man, and enabled him to act the part of a faithful minister of Christ. When contending for the faith, however, he remembered that 'the servant of the Lord must not strive, but in meekness instruct those who oppose themselves.' When surrounded by the 'pomps and vanities of the world,' he thought of their fading nature, and on the superior glory of the 'better and more enduring inheritance.' When struggling with the tribulations of the kingdom, he rejoiced in the rest that remaineth for the people of God. When exposed to the strife of tongues, and reviled by unreasonable and wicked men, he comforted himself with the words of his Lord: 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my name's sake.' When fainting with weakness, and dissolving in

death, the thoughts of heaven and of him who occupies its throne filled him with 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.'

These were the grand principles and springs of his feelings and conduct. Spirituality of mind was his life and his peace. After Owen, let no man find a reason for the want of it, in the supposed peculiarity or difficulty of his circumstances. Let not public life be an apology for a worldly spirit. Let not prosperity excuse pride, or adversity depression. Let not the contumelies of reproach justify a spirit of rancour, or controversy be considered as necessarily incompatible with the meekness and gentleness of Christ. He seems to have been intended as a specimen of what the grace of God can do for an uninspired individual, to encourage others to emulate his virtues, and to be followers of his patience and his faith. It would be wrong to refer to him as an authority, and sinful to clothe him with perfection: but if respect be due to Christian excellence, and enlightened obedience be entitled to esteem, the character of Owen demands the veneration of all the people of God.

As a Minister of Christ, his character and qualifications stand eminently high. Of his learning, knowledge of the Scriptures, and piety, the grand requisites of the gospel ministry, it is scarcely necessary to say any thing, after what has been brought forward. The languages of the cross were familiar to him as his mother tongue. To this his adversaries bear testimony. 'He was,' says Wood, 'a person well skilled in the tongues, Rabbinical learning, and Jewish rites and customs.' Those who want farther evidence have only to refer to his Theologoumena, and his work on the Hebrews. Of the use which he made of his superior advantages, as a public teacher and the pastor of a Christian church, we may still say something.

His talents, as a public speaker, were of the first order. His voice was strong, but not noisy; sweet, but exceedingly manly, with a certain sound of authority in it. His gesture was far removed from theatrical affectation, but always animated and adapted to his subject.[c] His personal appearance aided most powerfully the advantages of his voice,

[c] One of Gilbert's Epitaphs. Works, p. 37.

and all were supported by a presence of mind which seldom forsook him, even in the most trying circumstances. 'His personage,' says Wood, who knew him at Oxford, 'was proper and comely, and he had a very graceful behaviour in the pulpit; an eloquent elocution; a winning and insinuating deportment; and could, by the persuasion of his oratory, in conjunction with some other outward advantages, move and wind the affections of his admiring auditory, almost as he pleased.'[d] He seldom used notes. 'He had an admirable facility in discoursing on any subject pertinently and decently; and could better express himself extempore, than others with premeditation. He was never at a loss for want of language,—a happiness few can pretend to; and this he could shew in the presence even of the highest persons in the nation. He thus shewed that he had the command of his learning. His vast reading and experience were hereby made useful in resolving doubts, clearing obscurities, and healing breaches which sometimes seemed incurable.'[e]

His published discourses are far from unfavourable specimens of his pulpit talents. Those redundancies of which we complain in reading, must have been more tolerable in their delivery. Though diffuse and generally prolix, he is often energetic; and considering the state of the language at the time, and his careless habits of composition, it is surprising that so many eloquent and touching passages should be found in them. Usefulness, however, rather than display or effect, was the great object of all his public labours. He preached for eternity—

> Ambitious, not to shine or to excel,
> But to treat justly, what he loved so well.

By this rule, therefore, all his pulpit compositions must be tried. He considered the state and circumstances of his hearers, and endeavoured to adapt his instructions to them. As a good steward, he studied rightly to divide the word of truth, and to give to all the members of the family of God their due portion.

His attention to the church, as far as we are now capable of judging, seems to have been very exemplary. The Catechisms which he published to aid the young and the igno-

[d] Athen. Ox. vol. ii. p. 559. [e] Clarkson's Funeral Sermon.

rant, the discourses which he addressed to the church on particular occasions, the short addresses which he delivered at private meetings, on practical and experimental subjects, and those which he made at the celebration of the Lord's Supper, are specimens of the manner in which he discharged the functions of his office; and of his anxiety that he might be found faithful to the trust committed to him. He prescribed two things to himself, for his regulation in the work of the ministry: 'To impart those truths of whose power he had, in some measure, a real experience, and to press those duties which present occasions, temptations, and other circumstances rendered necessary to be attended to.'[f] He exemplified in himself, the correct and ample view which he gives of the duty of Pastors in his work on the Nature of the Gospel Church; the fifth chapter of which ought most seriously to be considered by all who occupy this important office. As many persons of rank and fortune were members of his church, the Doctor's circumstances, former connexions, and superior understanding, with his eminent attainments as a Christian, peculiarly fitted him for the management of such a body. He knew how to combine dignity of deportment as a gentleman, and superiority as a scholar, with the meekness and gentleness becoming the servant of his brethren for Christ's sake. 'His conversation was not only advantageous for its pleasantness and obligingness; but there was in it that which made it desirable to great persons, natives and foreigners, and that by so many that few could have what they desired.'[g]

His influence among the Non-conformists, and particularly among his brethren of the Congregational body, was very extensive. It is needless to recapitulate the circumstances which naturally promoted this. He outlived the greater part of the generation of Independents, which took part in the civil commotions. He was looked up to by his brethren, both near and at a distance, on all occasions of public difficulty; and from his connexions, could be of more service in those circumstances than any other individual. He was consulted by his brethren in the ministry, when they were perplexed about the path of duty; and

[f] Pref. to Spirit. Mind. [g] Clarkson's Funeral Sermon.

churches also applied for the assistance of his counsel and advice, when differences occurred in them which they found it difficult to settle. Thus his usefulness must have extended greatly beyond the sphere of his personal labours.

But it is as a writer, Dr. Owen has been most useful, and is now most generally known. Having so often had occasion to speak of his publications, it cannot be necessary now to go into any details respecting them. But a general observation or two may still be made, on his faults and his merits as an author. The chief deficiency is to be found in his style. His sentences are frequently long, perplexed, and encumbered with adjectives, often carelessly selected. 'Accustomed to dictate his ideas, he surveys the stores of a mind rich in knowledge; and perceiving clearly the leading truth which he meant to illustrate, he brings forward a long series of thoughts, all bearing on the subject. The associations which linked them together in his mind, were probably most natural; but these thoughts were perhaps not all requisite at the time: parentheses frequently occur, and the passage becomes perplexed. He had neither leisure nor inclination to revise and to retrench; perhaps though he had made the attempt, he was not qualified to render his writings much more acceptable by improvements in style. In general, however, it is not difficult to perceive his meaning, and when the sentence is intricate, a little attention will commonly enable the reader to disentangle the several clauses.'[h]

This is, perhaps, the best apology that can be offered for the obvious defects in the compositions of Owen. It may also be added, that even his own editions of his writings are, in general, most carelessly printed. No attention, almost, has been paid to the punctuation, and every subsequent edition has adopted and added to the blunders of the preceding. The language too, when he wrote, had not attained that classical purity and neatness at which it arrived in the beginning of the following century. I am doubtful, however, whether Owen would have studied it, though it had. He was inexcusably indifferent to the vehicle of his thoughts. Had he written less, and paid more attention to the pruning and arranging of his sentiments

[h] Wright's Preface to his Edition of Owen on the Hebrews.

and language, he would doubtless have been more useful. But to all ornament in theological writing, he was an enemy on principle. 'Know, reader, that you have to do with a person, who, provided his words but clearly express the sentiments of his mind, entertains a fixed and absolute disregard of all elegance and ornaments of speech. For

'Dicite Pontifices, in sacris quid facit aurum!'

In my opinion indeed, he who in a theological contest should please himself with a display of rhetorical flourishes, would derive no farther advantage from it, but that his head adorned with magnificent garlands and pellets, would fall a richer victim to the strokes of the learned.'[j]

But it is not of the want of tinsel and glitter that we complain against Owen, it is of simplicity and condensation. Most readers murmur at his prolixity and heaviness: and though the labour is repaid when persevered in, still, it might have been better, had this exercise of self-denial been unnecessary. How different is his style from the chaste and flowing elegance of Bate, and from the point and energy of Baxter; though the latter is far from a model of good writing. It is useless, however, now to complain. The exterior of the casket has little to attract; but its contents are more valuable than rubies.

Perhaps no theological writer of the period was better known, and, among a large class of Christians, so greatly respected. His Latin works extended his fame on the Continent, and led to the translation of several of his English productions, or induced foreign divines to learn the language, that they might enjoy the benefit of them. Many travelled into England to see and converse with him; many also were the letters which he received from learned persons abroad, but which unfortunately cannot now be recovered. Among these correspondents was the celebrated Anna Maria Schurmann, whose letters it would have been most gratifying to possess; but they also are lost.[k]

The influence of Owen's works in forming or directing the religious opinions, not only of his own age, but of the succeeding, was doubtless very great. Of this, the price which his larger performances continue to bring, and the

[j] Preface to Divine Justice. [k] Memoirs, p. 34.

numerous editions and abridgments of his various writings, still published, are alone sufficient proofs. Among the Dissenters, they have always been standard books; and the evangelical party in the Established Churches now equally respect them. Those of his works which continue most popular are all on the most important subjects, and from the extent to which they have been read, the amount of the good which they have effected, can never be ascertained in this world.

I do not know, that Owen ought to be considered an original writer. His works do not contain any important discoveries in theological science, or any great novelty of illustration. He seldom diverges from the common path of Calvinistic writers. This is noticed by Clarkson, in his Funeral Sermon: 'It is usual with persons of extraordinary parts, to straggle from the common road and affect novelty, though thereby they lose the best company; as though they could not appear eminent unless they march alone. But this great person did not affect singularity; they were old truths that he endeavoured to defend, those which were delivered by the first Reformers, and owned by the best divines of the Church of England.' Indeed, novelty in Christianity is not to be expected, nor ought it perhaps to be desired. A passage of Scripture may receive a new interpretation, an argument may be placed in a stronger light, a doctrine or a duty may be enforced by more powerful or more suitable reasonings; but the great truths, which constitute the foundation of faith and practice, must ever remain the same.

As a controversial writer, Owen is generally distinguished for calmness, acuteness, candour, and gentlemanly treatment of his opponents. He lived during a stormy period, and often experienced the bitterest provocation; but he very seldom lost his temper. He often handled the arguments of his adversaries very roughly; but he always saved their persons and feelings as much as possible. This, the most of them were obliged to acknowledge. Wood declares, that 'he was one of the fairest and most genteel of the writers who appeared against the Church of England; handling his adversaries with far more civil, decent, and temperate language than many of his fiery bre-

thren, and confining himself wholly to the cause, without the unbecoming mixture of personal slanders and reflections.' Stillingfleet acknowledges, that he 'treated him with civility and decent language.' Henry Dodwell admits, 'He was of a better temper than most of his brethren.' 'Dr. Owen,' says John Humfrey, 'is a person whose name I honour for his worth, learning, comprehensive parts; and one in whom was more of a gentleman as to his deportment than any Divine I ever knew among us.' And even Richard Baxter, his frequent and troublesome opponent, bears honourable testimony to his character. 'I doubt not,' he says, 'but he was a man of rare parts and worth. That Book of Communion is an excellent Treatise; and his great volumes on the Hebrews do all shew his great and eminent parts. It was his strange error, if he thought that freedom from a Liturgy, would have made most or many ministers, like himself, as free, and fluent, and copious of expression. In the late time, he had never been so long Dean of Christ Church, so oft Vice-chancellor of Oxford; so highly esteemed in the army, and with the persons then in power, if his extraordinary parts had not been known. If this excellent man had one mistake, yet he was of late years of more complying mildness, and sweetness, and peaceableness than ever before, or than many others. I doubt not but his soul is now with Christ, where there is no darkness, no mistakes, no separation of Christ's members from one another.'[1]

These are honourable testimonies, especially the last. Had controversy been always carried on in the spirit of Owen, it would not have been that baneful thing which it has so generally proved; till every book bearing a controversial title, is the object of disgust to many, who might be much benefited by reading both sides of a question. In this respect, the generality of modern writers have greatly the advantage of those who wrote in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There is, however, some danger of theological politeness becoming morbid. The disposition to please, and to compliment, may be carried too far. To abuse and vilify on the pretence of defending truth with spirit, and tamely to surrender its interests, from a desire

[1] Baxter's Reply to Owen's Twelve Arguments.

to stand well with its enemies, are very different things, and ought to be for ever distant.

By far the greatest portion of Owen's writings is controversial. This arose, not so much from the warlike disposition of the man, as from his circumstances. The Arminian, Socinian, Popish, Episcopalian, and Independent debates, occupied his attention, and were the subjects of his elaborate illustration. They were all deeply interesting then; and none of them have become altogether uninteresting since his death. One thing appears prominent in all his productions of this class—a strong desire to give them a practical direction, and to render them as useful as possible to his opponents and readers. His appeals to the conscience and the heart, and his constant reference to the good or evil tendency of particular sentiments, are calculated to improve the dispositions, as well as to enlighten the understanding. What good end is gained by silencing or triumphing over an adversary, if he is not convinced? Should it be evident that a victory is secured, if it be at the expense of exciting the malevolent propensities of human nature, it calls for humiliation rather than boasting. Men sometimes write in such a manner, as if it were their object to run down an opponent, rather than to convince, or instruct him; and to excite hatred to his person, as much as dislike to his opinions. Of this treatment, Owen was repeatedly the object; but nothing which ever fell from his pen retaliated it. Against such unprincipled conduct, the united voice of the Christian Republic ought to be raised, till the very attempt become hazardous to the character, or the cause to which it may belong.

As an expository writer, I have spoken of him at large in my account of his Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is as a practical, and especially as an experimental writer, that Owen is most generally known, and that he enjoys the greatest popularity; and it must be allowed, that this is the department in which he chiefly excels. Here, he was eminently at home. Possessed of the most accurate and extensive views of the whole scheme of Redemption, of a singularly spiritual mind, and of a high degree of devotional ardour; he enters into the minutest details of the Christian character, with the utmost familiarity, and traces

all its lineaments and graces with the hand of a master. He is never so taken up with the ornament or drapery, as to daub 'The Christian face divine;' nor in exhibiting the countenance and the figure, is there ever any thing distorted or disproportioned. SPIRITUAL LIFE is the vital energy which pervades the morality and the practice, recommended by Owen. It is not the abstraction of a mystical devotion, like that of Fenelon or Law; nor is it the enthusiastic raptures of a Zinzendorf; but the evangelical piety of Paul, and the heavenly affection of John. For every practice, mortification, and feeling, Owen assigns a satisfactory, because a scriptural, reason. The service which he recommends, is uniformly a reasonable service; and to every required exertion, he brings an adequate and constraining motive.

In examining the practical writings of such men as Hall, Taylor, and Tillotson, we miss that rich vein of evangelical sentiment, and that constant reference to the living principle of Christianity, which are never lost sight of in Owen. They abound in excellent directions, in rich materials for self-examination, and self-government; but they do not state with sufficient accuracy the connexion between gracious influence, and its practical results, from which all that is excellent in human conduct must proceed. They appear as the anatomists of the skin and the extremities; Owen is the anatomist of the heart. 'He dissects it with remarkable sagacity, tracing out its course and turnings in every path that leads from integrity, and marking the almost imperceptible steps which conduct to atrocious sins.'[m] While others attend to the faults or the excellences of the outer man, he devotes himself chiefly to the sins and enjoyments of the inner man; illustrating at the same time how they regulate the exterior behaviour. He uniformly begins with the grand principles of Christian action, and traces them from their source in the sovereign love of the Redeemer, through all their windings in human experience; examining all that retards, and noticing all that promotes their progress; shewing how they fertilize the soil through which they flow with the fruits of righteousness, and finally

[m] Arthur Young's Oweniana, Preface.

return in the incense of grateful praise to the atmosphere of heaven.

Owen, Goodwin, Baxter, and Howe, were the four leading men among the Non-conformist worthies. In assigning the first place to the subject of these memoirs, I am not aware of being improperly influenced, by my partiality for a favourite author; a partiality which I confess has been greatly increased by my researches into his history. It is the place which I apprehend to be indisputably due to him, and which the general voice of enlightened Christians has long conferred.[n] They were 'all honourable men,' whose characters and talents would have graced any cause. To each of them, Owen was perhaps inferior in some prominent feature or attainment; but none of them was equal to him on the whole, or occupied so many important fields of labour. Goodwin possessed his learning, but not his discernment or his public talents. Baxter was his equal in diligence, and perhaps his superior in acuteness and in energy; but possessed not his learning, good temper, or accuracy of sentiment. Howe was more original, and philosophical; but had less of the simplicity of Gospel doctrine. Comparisons, however, are invidious and unnecessary; each filled with propriety his own station, and shone in his own circle; and all are now enjoying together the fruits of their labours and sufferings. 'They

[n] Hervey's classification of the leading Non-conformists, and his character of them, nearly corresponds with what is given in the text. 'Dr. Owen, with his correct judgment, and an immense fund of learning. Mr. Charnock, with his masculine style, and an inexhaustible vein of thought. Dr. Goodwin, with sentiments eminently evangelical, and a most happy talent at opening, sifting, and displaying the hidden riches of Scripture. These I think are the *first three*:—Then comes Mr. Howe, nervous and majestic; with all the powers of imagery at his command. Dr. Bates, fluent and polished; with a never-ceasing store of beautiful similitudes. Mr. Flavel, fervent and affectionate; with a masterly hand at probing the conscience, and striking the passions. Mr. Caryl, Dr. Manton, and Mr. Poole, with many others; whose works will speak for them ten thousand times better than the tongue of panegyric, or the pen of biography.'—Theron and Aspasio, vol. iii. p. 206. Edit. 1767. The high opinion entertained of Baxter and Owen, by the late Arthur Young, Esq. Secretary to the Board of Agriculture, is evident from the selections from their works which he published under the title of Oweniana and Baxteriana. That of Mr. Wilberforce is no less decided. Baxter he classes 'among the brightest ornaments of the Church of England.' Others, he says, were men of great erudition, deep views of religion, and unquestionable piety; among whom he mentions in particular Dr. Owen, Mr. Howe, and Mr. Flavel. The heavenly-mindedness of Owen, and his work on the Mortification of Sin, he strongly recommends.—Wilberforce's Practical View, pp. 242, 243.

were the chiefs of the mighty men,' whom God raised up 'to strengthen his kingdom for him;' and who deserve to be held in everlasting remembrance. Should these imperfect Memoirs of him, who occupied the first rank among them, induce any to examine his principles, to cultivate his dispositions, and to follow his steps; I shall not consider that I have spent my time in vain, in collecting the scanty and widely scattered fragments of the life, writings, and connexions of JOHN OWEN.

APPENDIX,

CONSISTING OF

LETTERS, NOTES, ILLUSTRATIONS,

&c.

LETTER I.

TO MONSIEUR DU MOULIN.

SIR,

I HAVE received your strictures upon our Confession, wherein you charge it with palpable contradiction, nonsense, enthusiasm, and false doctrine; that is, all the evils that can be crowded into such a writing: and I understand by another letter since, that you have sent the same paper to others, which is the sole cause of the return which I now make to you: and I beg your pardon in telling you, that all your instances are your own mistakes, or the mistakes of your friend, as I shall briefly manifest to you.

First, You say there is a plain contradiction between chap. iii. art. 6. and chap. xxx. art. 2. In the first place it is said, 'None but the elect are redeemed;' but in the other it is said, 'The sacrament is a memorial of the one offering of Christ upon the cross for all.' I do admire to find this charged by you as a contradiction; for you know full well, that all our divines who maintain that the elect only were redeemed effectually by Christ, do yet grant that Christ died for all in the Scripture sense of the word; that is, some of all sorts, and never dreamt of any contradiction in their assertion. But your mistake is worse, for in chap. xxx. art. 2. which you refer to, there is not one word mentioned of Christ's dying for all; but that the sacrifice which he offered, was offered once for all, which is the expression of the apostle, to intimate that it was but once offered in opposition to the frequent repetitions of the sacrifices of the Jews. And pray, if you go on in your translation, do not fall into a mistake upon it; for in the very close of the

article it is said, 'That Christ's only sacrifice was a propitiation for the sins of all the elect.' The words you urge out of 2 Pet. ii. 1. are not in the text: they are by your quotation, 'denied him that had redeemed them;' but it is 'denied the sovereign Lord which had bought them;' which words have quite another sense.

Something you quote out of chap. vi. art. 6. where I think you suppose we do not distinguish between the 'reatus' and 'macula' of sin: and so think that we grant the defilement of Adam's person, and consequently of all intermediate propagations to be imputed unto us. Pray, Sir, give me leave to say, that I cannot but think your mind was employed about other things, when you dreamt of our being guilty of such a folly and madness; neither is there any one word in the Confession which gives countenance unto it. If you would throw away so much time as to read any part of my late discourse about justification, it is not unlikely but that you would see something of the nature of the guilt of sin, and the imputation of it, which may give you satisfaction.

In your next instance which you refer unto, chap. xix. art. 3. by some mistake (there being nothing to the purpose in that place) you say, 'It is presupposed that some who have attained age may be elected, and yet have not the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which is a pure enthusiasm, and is contrary to chap. xx. art. 2.' Why, Sir! that many who are eternally elected, and yet for some season, some less, some longer, do live without the knowledge of Christ, until they are converted by the word and Spirit, is not an enthusiasm; but your exception is contrary to the whole Scripture, contrary to the experience of all days and ages, overthrows the work of the ministry, and is so absurd to sense and reason, and daily experience, that I know not what to say to it; only, I confess, that if with some of the Arminians you do not believe that any are elected from eternity, or before they do actually believe, something may be spoken to countenance your exception: but that we cannot regard, for it was our design to oppose all their errors.

Your next instance is a plain charge of false doctrine, taken out of chap. xi. art. 1. speaking, as you say, of the active obedience of Christ imputed to us, which is contrary to

art. 3. where it is said, that Christ acquits by his obedience in death, and not by his fulfilling of the law. Sir, you still give me cause of some new admiration in all these objections, and I fear you make use of some corrupt copy of our Confession: for we say not, as you allege, that Christ by his obedience in death did acquit us, and not by his fulfilling of the law: but we say, that Christ by his obedience and death did fully discharge the debt of all those who are justified, which comprehends both his active and passive righteousness. But you add a reason, whereby you design to disprove this doctrine of ours, concerning the imputation of the active righteousness of Christ unto our justification. Why, you say, it is contrary to reason, for that we are freed from satisfying God's justice, by being punished by death, but not from the fulfilling of the law; therefore the fulfilling of the law by Christ, is no satisfaction for us: we are not freed from active obedience, but from passive obedience. Pray, Sir, do not mistake that such mistaken reasonings can give us any occasion to change our judgments in an article of truth of this importance. When you shall have been pleased to read my book of Justification, and have answered solidly what I have written upon this subject, I will tell you more of my mind: in the mean time I tell you, we are by the death of Christ freed from all sufferings, as they are purely penal, and the effects of the curse, though they spring out of that root: only, Sir, you and I know full well that we are not freed from pains, afflictions, and death itself, which had never been, had they not proceeded from the curse of the law. And so, Sir, by the obedience of Christ we are freed from obedience to the law, as to justification by the works thereof; we are no more obliged to obey the law in order to justification, than we are obliged to undergo the penalties of the law to answer its curse. But these things have been fully debated elsewhere.

In the last place, your friend wishes it could be avoided and declined to speak any thing about universal grace, for that it would raise some or most divines against it. I judge myself beholden to your friend for the advice, which I presume he judges to be good and wholesome: but I beg your pardon that I cannot comply with it, although I shall not reflect with any severity upon them who are of another judg-

ment: and to tell you the truth, the immethodical new method introduced to give countenance to universal grace, is, in my judgment, suited to draw us off from all due conceptions concerning the grace of God in Jesus Christ, which I shall not now stay to demonstrate, though I will not decline the undertaking of it, if God gives me strength, at any time. And I do wonder to hear you say, that many, if not most divines will rise against it, who have published in print, that there were but two in England that were of that opinion; and have strenuously opposed it yourself. How things are in France I know not, but at Geneva, in Holland, in Switzerland, in all the Protestant churches of Germany, I do know that this universal grace is exploded. Sir, I shall trouble you no farther. I pray be pleased to accept of my desire to undeceive you in those things, wherein either a corrupt copy of our Confession, or the reasonings of other men, have given you so many mistaken conceptions about our Confession. I am, Sir, yours,

J. Owen.

Letter II.

TO THE LADY HARTOPP.

Dear Madam,

Every work of God is good; the Holy One in the midst of us will do no iniquity; and all things shall work together for good unto them that love him; even those things which at present are not joyous, but grievous; only his time is to be waited for, and his way submitted unto, that we seem not to be displeased in our hearts, that he is Lord over us. Your dear infant is in the eternal enjoyment of the fruits of all our prayers, for the covenant of God is ordered in all things, and sure: we shall go to her; she shall not return to us. Happy she was in this above us, that she had so speedy an issue of sin and misery, being born only to exercise your faith and patience, and to glorify God's grace in her eternal blessedness. My trouble would be great on the account of my absence at this time from you both, but that this also is the Lord's doing; and I know my own uselessness wherever I am. But this I will beg of God for you both, that you

may not faint in this day of trial, that you may have a clear view of those spiritual and temporal mercies wherewith you are yet intrusted, all undeserved, that sorrow of the world may not so overtake your hearts, as to disenable to any duties, to grieve the Spirit, to prejudice your lives; for it tends to death. God in Christ will be better to you than ten children, and will so preserve your remnant, and so add to them, as shall be for his glory, and your comfort: only consider, that sorrow in this case is no duty, it is an effect of sin, whose cure by grace we should endeavour. Shall I say, be cheerful? I know I may. God help you to honour, grace, and mercy, in a compliance therewith. My heart is with you, my prayers shall be for you, and am,

Dear Madam,

Your most affectionate friend,

And unworthy pastor,

J. Owen.

Letter III.

TO MRS. POLHILL.

Dear Madam,

The trouble expressed in yours is a great addition to mine: the sovereignty of divine wisdom and grace is all that I have at this day to retreat unto; God direct you thereunto also, and you will find rest and peace. It adds to my trouble that I cannot possibly come down to you this week; nothing but engaged duty could keep me from you one hour: yet I am conscious how little I can contribute to your guidance in this storm, or your satisfaction. Christ is your pilot, and however the vessel is tossed whilst he seems to sleep, he will arise and rebuke these winds and waves in his own time. I have done it, and yet shall farther wrestle with God for you, according to the strength he is pleased to communicate. Little it is which at this distance I can mind you of, yet some few things are necessary. Sorrow not too much for the dead; she is entered into rest, and is taken away from the evil to come. Take heed lest by too much grief, you too much grieve that Holy Spirit, who is infinitely more to us than all natural relations. I blame you not that you

so far attend to the call of God in this dispensation, as to search yourself, to judge and condemn yourself: grace can make it an evidence to you, that you shall not be judged or condemned of the Lord. I dare not say that this chastisement was not needful. We are not in heaviness unless need be; but if God be pleased to give you a discovery of the wisdom and care that is in it, and how needful it was to awaken and restore your soul in any thing, perhaps in many things, in due time you will see grace and love in it also. I verily believe God expects, in this dealing with you, that you should judge yourself, your sins, and your decays; but he would not have you misjudge your condition. But we are like froward children, who when they are rebuked and corrected, neglect other things, and only cry that their parents hate and reject them. You are apt to fear, to think and say, that you are one whom God regards not, who are none of his, and that for sundry reasons which you suppose you can plead: But, saith God, this is not the business, this is a part of your frowardness; I call you to quicken your grace, to amend your own ways, and you think you have nothing to do, but to question my love. Pray, madam, my dear sister, child and care, beware you lose not the advantage of this dispensation; you will do so, if you use it only to afflictive sorrows, or questioning of the love of God, or your interest in Christ. The time will be spent in these things, which should be taken up in earnest endeavours after a compliance with God's will, quickenings of grace, returns after backsliding, mortification of sin and love of the world, until the sense of it do pass away. Labour vigorously to bring your soul to this twofold resolution. (1.) That the will of God is the best rule for all things, and their circumstances. (2.) That you will bring yourself into a fresh engagement to live more to him; and you will find the remainder of your work easy; for it is part of the yoke of Christ. I shall trouble you no farther, but only to give you the assurance that you are in my heart continually, which is nothing; but it helps to persuade me that you are in the heart of Christ, which is all. I am,

Dear Madam,

Your very affectionate servant,

J. Owen.

Letter IV.

TO HIS CHURCH, WHEN HE WAS SICK AT THE LORD WHARTON'S IN THE COUNTRY.

Beloved in the Lord,

Mercy, grace, and peace be multiplied to you from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, by the communication of the Holy Ghost. I thought and hoped that by this time I might have been present with you, according to my desire and resolution; but it has pleased our holy, gracious Father otherwise to dispose of me, at least for a season. The continuance of my painful infirmities, and the increase of my weaknesses, will not allow me at present to hope, that I should be able to bear the journey. How great an exercise this is to me, considering the season, he knows, to whose will I would in all things cheerfully submit myself. But although I am absent from you in body, I am in mind, affection, and spirit present with you, and in your assemblies; for I hope you will be found my crown and rejoicing in the day of the Lord: and my prayer for you night and day is, that you may stand fast in the whole will of God, and maintain the beginning of your confidence without wavering, firm unto the end. I know it is needless for me at this distance to write to you, about what concerns you in point of duty at this season, that work being well supplied by my brother in the ministry; you will give me leave, out of my abundant affections towards you, to bring some few things to your remembrance, as my weakness will permit.

In the first place, I pray God, it may be rooted and fixed in our minds, that the shame and loss we may undergo, for the sake of Christ, and the profession of the gospel, is the greatest honour which in this life we can be made partakers of: so it was esteemed by the apostles; they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name's sake: it is a privilege superadded to the grace of faith, which all are not made partakers of. Hence it is reckoned to the Philippians in a peculiar manner, that it was given to them, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for

him: that it is far more honourable to suffer with Christ, than to reign with the greatest of his enemies: if this be fixed by faith in our minds, it will tend greatly to our encouragement. I mention these things only, as knowing that they are more at large pressed on you.

The next thing I would recommend to you at this season, is, the increase of mutual love among yourselves; for every trial of our faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, is also a trial of our love towards the brethren. This is that which the Lord Christ expects from us, namely, That when the hatred of the world doth openly manifest and act itself against us all, we should evidence an active love among ourselves. If there have been any decays, any coldness herein, if they are not recovered and healed in such a season, it can never be expected. I pray God therefore, that your mutual love may abound more and more in all the effects and fruits of it towards the whole society, and every member thereof. You may justly measure the fruit of your present trial by the increase of this grace among you: in particular have a due regard to the weak and the tempted; that that which is lame may not be turned out of the way, but rather let it be healed.

Furthermore, brethren, I beseech you, hear a word of advice in case the persecution increases, which it is like to do for a season. I could wish that because you have no ruling elders, and your teachers cannot walk about publicly with safety, that you would appoint some among yourselves, who may continually, as their occasions will admit, go up and down, from house to house, and apply themselves peculiarly to the weak, the tempted, the fearful, those that are ready to despond, or to halt, and to encourage them in the Lord. Choose out those to this end who are endued with a spirit of courage and fortitude; and let them know that they are happy whom Christ will honour with this blessed work: and I desire the persons may be of this number who are faithful men, and know the state of the church: by this means you will know what is the frame of the members of the church, which will be a great direction to you, even in your prayers. Watch now, brethren, that, if it be the will of God, not one soul may be lost from under your care; let no one be overlooked or neglected; consider all

their conditions, and apply yourselves to all their circumstances.

Finally, brethren, that I be not at present farther troublesome to you, examine yourselves, as to your spiritual benefit which you have received, or do receive, by your present fears and dangers, which will alone give you the true measure of your condition; for if this tends to the exercise of your faith, and love, and holiness, if this increases your valuation of the privileges of the gospel, it will be an undoubted token of the blessed issue which the Lord Christ will give unto your troubles. Pray for me as you do, and do it the rather, that, if it be the will of God, I may be restored to you; and if not, that a blessed entrance may be given to me into the kingdom of God and glory. Salute all the church in my name. I take the boldness in the Lord to subscribe myself,

Your unworthy Pastor,
And your Servant for Jesus' sake,
J. OWEN.

P. S. I humbly desire you would in your prayers remember the family where I am, from whom I have received, and do receive, great Christian kindness. I may say as the apostle of Onesiphorus, The Lord give to them, that they may find mercy of the Lord in that day, for they have often refreshed me in my great distress.

LETTER V.

TO CHARLES FLEETWOOD, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED yours, and am glad to hear of your welfare; there is more than ordinary mercy in every day's preservation. My wife, I bless God, is much revived, so that I do not despair of her recovery: but for myself, I have been under the power of various distempers for fourteen days past, and do yet so continue. God is fastening his instruction concerning the approach of that season, wherein I must lay down this tabernacle. I think my mind has been too much intent upon some things, which I looked on as

services for the church, but God will have us know, that he has no need of me nor them, and is therefore calling me off from them. Help me with your prayers, that I may through the riches of his grace in Christ, be in some measure ready for my account. The truth is, we cannot see the latter rain in its season, as we have seen the former, and a latter spring thereon: death, that will turn in the streams of glory upon our poor withering souls, is the best relief. I begin to fear that we shall die in this wilderness; yet ought we to labour and pray continually that the heavens would drop down from above, and the skies pour down righteousness, that the earth may open and bring forth salvation, and that righteousness may spring up together. If ever I return to you in this world, I beseech you to contend yet more earnestly, than ever I have done with God, with my own heart, with the church, to labour after spiritual revivals. Our affectionate service to your Lady, and to all your family that are of the household of God. I am, Dearest Sir,

Yours most affectionately whilst I live,

J. OWEN.

Stadham, July 8.

LETTER VI.

TO CHARLES FLEETWOOD, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

THE bearer has stayed long enough with us to save you the trouble of reading an account of me in my own scribbling: a longer stay I could not prevail with him for, though his company was a great refreshment to me. Both you, and your whole family, in all their occasions and circumstances, are daily in my thoughts; and when I am enabled to pray, I make mention of you all without ceasing. I find you and I are much in complaining: for my part I must say, and is there not a cause? so much deadness, so much inspirituality, so much weakness in faith, coldness in love, instability in holy meditations, as I find in myself, is cause sufficient of complaints; but is there not cause also of thanksgiving, and joy in the Lord? Are there not reasons for

them? When I begin to think of them, I am overwhelmed; they are great, they are glorious, they are inexpressible. Shall I now invite you to this great duty of rejoicing more in the Lord? Pray for me that I may do so; for the near approach of my dissolution calls for it earnestly; my heart has done with this world, even in the best, and most desirable of its refreshments: if the joy of the Lord be not now strength unto it, it will fail. But I must have done. Unless God be pleased to affect some person or persons, with a deep sense of our declining condition, of the temptations and dangers of the day, filling them with compassion for the souls of men, making them fervent in spirit in their work, it will go but ill with us. It may be these thoughts spring from causeless fears; it may be none amongst us has an evil, a barren heart but myself: but bear with me in this my folly; I cannot lay down these thoughts until I die; nor do I mention them at present, as though I should not esteem it a great mercy to have so able a supply as Mr. C. but I am groaning after deliverance; and being near the centre, do hope I feel the drawing of the love of Christ with more earnestness than formerly: but my naughty heart is backward in these compliances. My affectionate service to Sir John Hartopp, and his lady, and to the rest of your family, when God shall return them unto you. I am, Dear Sir,

Yours most affectionately,
In everlasting bonds,
J. OWEN.

LETTER VII.

TO THE REVEREND MR. ROBERT ASTY OF NORWICH.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED yours by Mr. B. to whom I shall commit this return, and hope it will come safely to your hands: for although I can acknowledge nothing of what you are pleased out of your love to ascribe unto me, yet I shall be always

ready to give you my thoughts in the way of brotherly advice, whenever you shall stand in need of it: and at present as things are circumstanced, I do not see how you can wave or decline the call of the church, either in conscience or reputation. For to begin with the latter; should you do so upon the most Christian and cogent grounds in your own apprehensions, yet wrong interpretations will be put upon it, and so far as it is possible we ought to keep ourselves, not only 'extra noxam,' but 'suspicionem' also. But the point of conscience is of more moment: all things concurring, the providence of God in bringing you to that place, the judgment of the church on your gifts and grace for their edification and example, the joint consent of the body of the congregation in your call, with present circumstances of a singular opportunity for preaching the word, I confess at this distance I see not how you can discharge that duty you owe to Jesus Christ (whose you are, and not your own, and must rejoice to be, what he will have you to be, be it more or less) in refusing a compliance unto these manifest indications of his pleasure; only remember that you sit down and count what it will cost you, which I know you will not be discouraged by; for the daily exercise of grace, and learning of wisdom should not be grievous unto us, though some of their occasions may be irksome. For the latter part of your letter, I know no difference between a pastor and a teacher, but what follows their different gifts; the office is absolutely the same in both; the power the same, the right to the administration of all ordinances every way the same; and at that great church at Boston, in New England, the teacher was always the principal person; so was Mr. Cotton and Mr. Norton: where gifts make a difference, there is a difference; otherwise there is none. I pray God guide you in this great affair; and I beg your prayers for myself in my weak infirm condition. I am

Your affectionate friend and brother,

J. Owen.

London, March 16.

N. B. We may see the concurrent judgment of those two great divines, Dr. Owen, and Dr. Goodwin, about the

equal authority and power of a pastor and a teacher in a church, as appears by two letters of Dr. Goodwin to the same person, upon this subject, printed at the end of the fourth volume of his works.

Letter VIII.

TO CHARLES FLEETWOOD, ESQ.

Dear Sir,

Although I am not able to write one word myself, yet I am very desirous to speak one word more to you in this world, and do it by the hand of my wife. The continuance of your entire kindness, knowing what it is accompanied withal, is not only greatly valued by me, but will be a refreshment to me, as it is even in my dying hour. I am going to him whom my soul has loved, or rather who has loved me with an everlasting love, which is the whole ground of all my consolation. The passage is very irksome and wearisome, through strong pains of various sorts, which are all issued in an intermitting fever. All things were provided to carry me to London to-day, according to the advice of my physicians; but we are all disappointed by my utter disability to undertake the journey. I am leaving the ship of the church in a storm; but whilst the great Pilot is in it, the loss of a poor underrower will be inconsiderable. Live, and pray, and hope, and wait patiently, and do not despond; the promise stands invincible, that he will never leave us, nor forsake us. I am greatly afflicted at the distempers of your dear lady; the good Lord stand by her, and support and deliver her. My affectionate respects to her, and the rest of your relations, who are so dear to me in the Lord. Remember your dying friend with all fervency; I rest upon it, that you do so, and am

Yours entirely,

J. Owen.

August 22, 1683.

N. B. The Doctor died August 24.

Among the young men, who were placed under his eye while at the university, was a son of Judge Puleston, whose lady was a relation of the Doctor. In this family Mr. Philip Henry lived for some time as chaplain and tutor, and he speaks of Lady Puleston as the best friend he had on earth; and as a woman in piety inferior to few, and in learning superior to most of her sex. She appears to have been a very excellent Christian, and died of a painful complaint, on the 29th Sept. 1658.—(Memoirs of Philip Henry, pp. 21—47.) The two following letters were kindly furnished me, by the Rev. Thomas Stedman, Vicar of St. Chad's, Shrewsbury; and though they contain nothing of importance, as they are originals and illustrate a little the connexions of Owen, they are entitled to a place.

Letter IX.

TO LADY PULESTON.

Madam,

Whilst I was in hope to have waited upon you, and your worthy husband, at your own house; I reserved my begging of your pardon, that I had not made my acknowledgment of your favour in owning and minding a relation of kindred, and sundry other respects, unto that season. Being by the providence of God prevented as to those resolutions, I am led to lay hold on this opportunity, of returning my hearty thanks for your kind remembrances of him, who is no way able to deserve your respects, though he will at all times have as hearty and entire an honour and regard to your ladyship, and your noble husband as any person living. I hope you both, with my cousins, your sons, are in health; and am resolved (if the Lord please) to see you in the [beginning] of this spring. My wife presents her faithful service and respects to your ladyship, and is glad to hear of your name. For my part, it is some contentment to me, that whilst I am in this place, I have some little opportunity to express a regard to that relation you are pleased to allow me the honour of, by taking the best care I can of him who bears the name

of your family, my young cousin Puleston—I humbly beg your pardon of this trouble, and leave to subscribe myself,

Madam, your most humble servant,
And affectionate kinsman,
JOHN OWEN.

My most humble service of respects, with many thanks for his kind invitation, to your worthy husband.

For the truly noble and virtuous Lady Puleston, his honoured friend and kinswoman—THESE.

Ox: Ch: Ch: Coll: Jan. 26th, 1657.

LETTER X.

FROM LADY PULESTON TO DR. OWEN,

From a copy in the hand-writing of Mr. Philip Henry.

MY MUCH HONOURED COUSIN, *(No date.)*

I WAS in hopes I should have seen you here, as you proposed, the last spring, and am very sorry it fell out otherwise. It hath pleased the Lord to lay me low under his hand by much pain, and many months' sickness from a cancer in my breast, and I am waiting every day till my change cometh; but if we meet no more on earth, I hope we shall in the arms of Jesus Christ. There is a friend of mine, whose name is Edward Thomas, of Wrexham, who brings his son to your college, and I request you to countenance him with your favour. The youth is very hopeful both in learning and grace, and his father an ancient professor of godliness in these parts, and one of approved integrity; and I know, Sir, that such and what concerns them lie near your heart upon far greater and other interests than mine; and I persuade myself, what your opportunities will permit you to do in his behalf, you will receive a full recompense of reward for, from him who hath promised to requite even a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple.

Mr. Henry is here with me, much my comfort in my present affliction; what my husband intends concerning him, is not yet settled, but I hope it will shortly be. In the mean time, I am loth he should lose a certainty in the College, for

an uncertainty here; and do, therefore, desire you to continue his place to him for a while longer, that seeing the Lord hath made him willing to lay out himself in the work of the gospel, so far remote from his friends, in this poor lost corner of the land, he may not in any thing be prejudiced for our sakes, who do esteem him highly in love, and desire to do it yet more and more. My husband is at London, or in his way home. We and ours are much indebted to you for your love, and I should have been very glad, if it might have fallen within the compass of my abilities, to make known other than by words, my sense of your many kindnesses: but it is the Lord's will I should be your debtor. With my unfeigned respects and service to your Lady and self,

I rest, your affectionate Cousin and Friend,

E. P.

Mr. Henry was presented to the parish of Worthenbury, where they resided, by the Puleston family, and remained in it till he was ejected in 1662. Another very excellent letter, from Lady Puleston to Mr. Henry, is inserted in his Memoirs, pp. 24, 25.

Letter XI.

TO SIR JOHN HARTOPP.

——— My duty, my obligations, and my inclinations, do all concur in the esteem I have for you both; and I do make mention of you daily in my poor supplications—and that with particular respect to the present condition of your Lady: that God, who hath revealed himself unto us, as the God who heareth prayer, will yet glorify his name, and be a present help unto her, in the time of trouble. In the mean time, let her, and you, and me, strive to love Christ more, to abide more with him, and to be less in ourselves. He is our best friend. I pray God with all my heart that I may be weary of every thing else, but converse and communion with him; yea, of the best of my mercies, so far as at any time they may be hinderances thereof. My wife presents her humble service unto your Lady and yourself, as doth also, Sir, &c.

Letter XII.

DR. OWEN TO A FRIEND.

Sir,

I am very sorry to find that there is a difference arisen between Mr. C—— and yourself. Since the receipt of yours, I received one from him, with an account of the difference, and his thoughts upon it at large. I do not therefore judge it meet to write any thing at present about it, until I am ready to give unto you both an account of my thoughts, which, by reason of many avocations, I cannot now do. All that I shall therefore say at present, is, that without mutual love, and condescension, no interposition of advice will issue the business to the glory of Christ and the gospel. I pray God, guide you both by that Spirit which is promised to lead us into all truth. Upon the first opportunity you will have a farther account of his sense, who is, &c.

January 2, 1679.

The last two Letters are given from Dr. Williams's account of Dr. Owen, prefixed to his Abridgement of the Exposition of the Hebrews, by whom they were first published.

Letter XIII.

TO MR. BAXTER.

Sir,

The continuance of my cold, which yet holds me, with the severity of the weather, have hitherto hindered me from answering my purpose of coming unto you at Acton, but yet I hope ere long to obtain the advantage of enjoying your company there for a season. In the mean time I return you my thanks for the communication of your papers; and shall on every occasion manifest, that you have no occasion to question, whether I were in earnest in what I proposed, in reference to the concord you design. For the desire of it is continually upon my heart, and to express that desire on all occasion, I esteem one part of that profession of the gospel which I am called unto. Could I contribute any thing towards the accomplishment of so holy, so necessary a

work, I should willingly spend myself, and be spent in it. For what you design concerning your present essay, I like it very well, both upon the reasons you mention in your letter, as also that all those who may be willing and desirous to promote so blessed a work, may have copies by them to prepare their thoughts in reference to the whole.

For the present, upon the liberty granted in your letter (if I remember it aright) I shall tender you a few queries; which if they are useless or needless, deal with them accordingly.

As 1. Are not the severals proposed or insisted on, too many for this first attempt? The general heads I conceive are not; but under them, very many particulars are not only included, which is unavoidable, but expressed also, which may too much dilate the original consideration of the whole.

2. You expressly exclude the Papists, who will also sure enough exclude themselves, and do, from any such agreement: but have you done the same as to the Socinians, who are numerous, and ready to include themselves upon our communion? The creed, as expounded in the four first councils will do it.

3. Whether some expressions suited to prevent future divisions and separations, after a concord is obtained, may not at present, to avoid all exasperation, be omitted, as seeming reflective on former actings, when there was no such agreement among us, as is now aimed at?

4. Whether insisting in particular, on the power of the magistrate, especially as under civil coercition and punishment, in cases of error or heresy, be necessary in this first attempt? These generals occurred to my thoughts, upon my first reading of your proposals. I will now read them again, and set down, as I pass on, such apprehensions in particular, as I have of the severals of them.

To the first answer, under the first question, I assent; so also to the first proposal, and the explanation; likewise to the second and third. I thought to have proceeded thus throughout; but I foresee my so doing would be tedious and useless; I shall therefore mention only what at present may seem to require second thoughts. As.

1. To Propos. 9. by those instances [what words to use in preaching, in what words to pray, in what decent habit]

do you intend homilies, prescribed forms of prayer, and habits superadded to those of vulgar decent use? Present controversies will suggest an especial sense under general expressions.

2. Under Pos. 13. Do you think a man may not leave a church, and join himself to another, unless it be for such a cause or reason, as he supposeth sufficient to destroy the being of the church? I meet with this now answered in your 18th Propos. and so shall forbear farther particular remarks, and pass on.

In your answer to the second question, your 10th Position hath in it somewhat that will admit of farther consideration, as I think. In your answer to the third question have you sufficiently expressed the accountableness of churches mutually, in case of offence from maladministration and church censures? This also I now see in part answered, Proposition fifth. I shall forbear to add any thing as under your answer to the last question, about the power of the magistrate, because I fear, that in that matter of punishing, I shall somewhat dissent from you; though as to mere coercion I shall in some cases agree.

Upon the whole matter, I judge your proposals worthy of great consideration, and the most probable medium for the attaining of the end aimed at, that yet I have perused. If God give not a heart and mind to desire peace and union, every expression will be disputed, under pretence of truth and accuracy: but if these things have a place in us answerable to that which they enjoy in the gospel, I see no reason why all the true disciples of Christ might not upon these, and the like principles, condescend in love unto the practical concord and agreement, which not one of them dare deny to be their duty to aim at. Sir, I shall pray that the Lord would guide and prosper you in all studies and endeavours, for the service of Christ in the world, especially in this your desire and study for the introducing of the peace and love promised amongst them that believe, and do beg your prayers.

Your truly affectionate Brother,
And unworthy Fellow-servant,
JOHN OWEN.

Jan. 25, 1668.

POSTHUMOUS WRITINGS.

About the time of the Doctor's death, a small manuscript was handed about, containing twelve arguments against conformity to worship, not of Divine institution. The leading object of these arguments is, to point out the unlawfulness of those who had separated from the Church of England, uniting in its public services; as those services are of a very different nature from the worship which Christ has appointed. This MS. occasioned a very violent discussion. It was sent to Baxter as that which had satisfied many of the impropriety of joining in the Liturgy. 'I hastily answered them,' he says, 'but found after, that it had been most prudent to have omitted his name; for, on that account, a swarm of revilers, in the city, poured out their keenest censures, and three or four wrote against me, whom I answered.' No wonder that Owen's friends were displeased, as he was scarcely in his grave when this attempt was made by Baxter, to convict him of no less than forty-two errors in the space of ten pages! It reminds us of the controversy between Erasmus and Natalis Bedda. The latter extracted from the writings of Erasmus two hundred erroneous propositions, who revenged himself in the same way, by calculating that Bedda had been guilty of a hundred and eighty-one lies, three hundred and ten calumnies, and forty-seven blasphemies! Owen's Twelve Arguments are printed in the octavo edition of his Sermons, published in 1720.[a] Baxter's Reply is in his 'Defence of Catholic Communion.' The occasional conformity controversy gave a great deal of trouble to the Dissenters, both then and afterwards, to which Baxter's conduct and writings very largely contributed. Owen's Tract is one of the best things on the other side.

'A Treatise on the Dominion of Sin and Grace, 1668.'[b] This small work was published by the Doctor's widow, and edited by Mr. Chauncy, who assures us it was left by the author in a state of preparation for the press. It is the substance of a few sermons from Rom. vi. 14. He endeavours to ascertain in whom the reign of sin exists, how the law supports it, and how grace delivers from it, by setting up its

[a] Works, vol. xxi. p. 519. [b] Ibid. vol. xiv. p. 397.

dominion in the heart. It discovers the same experimental acquaintance with the state of nature and of grace, which appears in the other productions of the author, on similar subjects. There is nothing of barren speculation in it; but the most accurate knowledge of the theory of Christianity, combined with its application to the heart and conduct. It is well fitted to promote that practical godliness, which is the grand end of the dispensation of mercy.

In 1693 appeared the last part of his work on the Spirit: 'Two Discourses concerning the Holy Spirit and his work. The one, of the Spirit as a Comforter; the other, as he is the Author of spiritual gifts.'[a] There is a preface to it by Nathaniel Mather, the son of Richard Mather, President of Harvard College, Pastor of the Independent Church in Lime-street. 'As God gave Dr. Owen transcendent abilities,' he says, 'so he gave him also a boundless enlargement of heart, and an insatiable desire to do service to Christ and his church, insomuch as he was thereby carried on through great bodily weakness, languishing, and pains, besides many other trials and discouragements, to bring out of his treasury, like a scribe well instructed into the kingdom of heaven, many useful and excellent fruits of his studies, much beyond the expectation and hope of those who saw how often and how long he was near the grave.'

'The Gospel Grounds and Evidences of the Faith of God's Elect,' was published in 1695.[b] The preface is written by Isaac Chauncy. The leading object of the treatise is, to inquire into the nature of saving faith; and into the evidence which a Christian ought to have that his belief is genuine or sincere. Had the Tract been entitled 'Evidences of genuine religion,' or something similar, the subject of it would have been more accurately defined; as much that it contains is not more connected with faith, than with other Christian principles. It furnishes some valuable illustration of that state of mind and conduct, which every Christian who desires to make his calling and election sure ought to cultivate.

In 1721, a folio volume appeared, entitled, 'A complete Collection of the Sermons of the Rev. and Learned John Owen, D. D. formerly published: with an addition of many

[a] Works, vol. iv. p. 153. [b] Ibid. vol. xi. p. 494.

others never before printed. Also, several valuable Tracts, now first published from MS. and some others which were very scarce.' There is prefixed to it, Memoirs of the Doctor, drawn up by Mr. Asty, pastor of the Church in Rope-Maker's Alley, assisted by Sir John Hartopp, to whom the volume is dedicated. There is also a preface written by John Nesbitt, Matthew Clarke, Thomas Ridgley, D. D. and Thomas Bradbury, Independent ministers in London, and all men of note in their day. Besides those things which we have noticed in the order in which they appeared, it contains a Funeral Sermon for the Doctor, by Mr. Clarkson, which is remarkably barren of information about its object. There are twenty-nine Sermons, never before published; also fourteen short Discourses, resolving various cases of conscience, delivered at Church meetings between 1672, and 1680.[c] A Tract of Marrying after Divorce on account of Adultery, the lawfulness of which he maintains. Another of Infant Baptism and Dipping in which he argues in support of the former, and in opposition to the latter.[d] The rest of the Tracts have been noticed already.

In 1756, 'Thirteen Sermons, preached on various occasions, by John Owen, D.D.' were published by Mrs. Cooke, of Stoke Newington, grand-daughter to Sir John Hartopp. Several of them were preached at ordinations, and a few of them at Stadham in Oxfordshire. They were all preached between 1669, and 1682; and appear to have been taken down in short-hand, by Sir John Hartopp, from whose papers they were selected.[e]

In 1760, 'Twenty-five Discourses, suitable to the Lord's Supper, delivered by Dr. Owen, just before the administration of that sacred ordinance,' were published by Richard Winter, minister of the Church in New Court, Carey Street. They were furnished from the same source with the former volume, and are dedicated to Mrs. Cooke. They also were delivered between 1669, and 1682. From the dates, which are regularly prefixed to them, it appears that the Lord's Supper was very frequently observed in the Doctor's church, often at the interval of a fortnight. For instance, Discourse iv. was delivered Dec. 24, 1669,—Discourse v. Jan. 7, 1670.

[c] Works, vol. xvi. p. 507. [d] Ibid. vol. xxi. pp. 537, 549.
[e] Ibid. vol. xvii. p. 1.

What the Doctor's belief was respecting the frequency of observing the Lord's Supper, appears from his Catechism. The Independent Churches in England, at the beginning, observed the Lord's Supper every first day of the week; when their present practice came to be generally adopted, I am unable to say.[f]

Anthony Wood ascribes some other works to Owen, which he acknowledges he had not seen; and which, I am satisfied, either were not his, or were other things of Owen's, whose titles were mistaken by Wood. 1. 'A thanksgiving Sermon, before parliament the 15th of August, 1653.' This was a day of thanksgiving for a victory over the Dutch. Whitelocke mentions it, but takes no notice of the preachers. Owen might be one of them, but I suspect the Sermon was not published. 2. 'A Sermon on 1 John i. 3. 1658.' This, I suppose, is the Doctor's work on Communion, which was published about this time, and is founded on the above passage. 3. 'A pamphlet called *Mene Tekel.*' Wood refers to the Oxford Decree, as attributing this work to Owen. That Decree, indeed, refers to Mene Tekel; but does not speak of Owen as its author. The full title of the pamphlet, which I have examined, is 'Mene Tekel; or the Downfall of Tyranny. A treatise, wherein liberty and equity are vindicated, and tyranny condemned by the law of God and right reason: and the people's power and duty to execute justice, without, and upon wicked governors, asserted by *Laophilus Mysotyrannus*, 4to. 1663.' It is a very bold republican Tract; but it is only necessary to look into it to be satisfied that neither the style nor the sentiments are Owen's.

He is represented also, as one of the continuators of Matthew Poole's English Annotations on the Bible; but he had no hand in that work. 'The Puritan turned Jesuite,' 4to. 1643, is sometimes stupidly inserted in the list of his works, the very title of which is enough to shew that Owen could not have written it.

[f] Works, vol. xvii. p. 143.

PREFACES TO THE WORKS OF OTHERS.

Besides his own numerous writings, Dr. Owen ushered into the world, with Prefaces, or recommendatory Epistles, a great number of works by other authors. Of these, as far as they are known to me, I shall now proceed to give some account, in the order in which they appeared.

'A Collection of the works of Dr. Thomas Taylor,' one of the early Puritans, was published in a folio volume in 1653; to which was prefixed his Life, by Joseph Caryl, and a Preface by Goodwin and Owen, which I have never seen. The volume contains Tracts and Discourses on a variety of subjects; some of them with very quaint titles—Catechistical Exercises—Jailor's Conversion—Famine of the Word—Peter's Repentance—The Owle of the Gospel—The Stranger at home, &c. &c. &c. The author was a man of eminent piety, who suffered much for his principles and his zeal. His works are now little known, but were formerly much esteemed. He died in 1632.

'Justification without conditions, by W. Eyre, Minister of the gospel, and pastor of a church in the city of New Sarum, 8vo. 1653.' To this volume a Preface is prefixed by Dr. Owen, dated Westminster, November 7th, 1653. It does not appear that he had previously read the work, as he speaks of but 'a minute of time given him,' to express his opinion. It refers, therefore, entirely to the subject, and to the general opinion which he had formed of the writer's sentiments and character. How far he was justified, in sending into the world a production which he had not read, is doubtful. I question whether he would have given it his sanction had he perused it. The second edition, published in 1695, omits the Doctor's preface. Many of the sentiments in the work, such as justification before faith—the denial that faith is the means of justification—and his views of election, and some other subjects, are such as Owen could not approve of. It is decidedly Antinomian in its statements and tendency, and was designed for an answer to Messrs. Woodbridge, Cranford, and Baxter. The last of whom replied to it the same year, in 'An Admonition to

Mr. William Eyre.' The author was ejected from St. Edmund's church in Salisbury.

'The private Christian's *Non ultra*, or a Plea for the Layman's interpreting the Scriptures, by Philolaoclerus, 1656.' In his preface to this pamphlet, the Doctor tells us the author was unknown to him, and 'that he does not build his thesis on those principles, which, in church affairs, he owned as the mind of God; but, he hoped, that what he had brought forward would be considered by some, who were interested to own it, before they gave in their account.' The object of it is much the same with that of the Doctor's work, on the duty of pastors and people. The author endeavours to shew, that it is the duty and privilege of Christians to meet together to instruct and exhort one another; —a practice which has generally characterized the best times of the church, and which, when conducted with prudence and piety, may be of considerable service.

'A Defence of Mr. John Cotton, from the imputation of self-contradiction, charged on him, by Mr. Dan. Cawdry, 12mo. 1658.' Of this little work we have spoken repeatedly in the text. Owen's preface is as large as the book itself, and is a defence of his own work on Schism, against Cawdry's attack on it.[g]

'The true idea of Jansenism, both historic and dogmatic, by Theophilus Gale. 12mo. 1669.' The object of this small work is to explain the nature, origin, and progress of those disputes between the Jansenists and Jesuits; which had so long agitated France—disputes relating to the same points, grace, predestination, and free-will, which disturbed the Protestant churches. Mr. Gale, during a residence on the continent, had enjoyed peculiar opportunities of collecting information on the subject, and this volume affords a condensed and correct view of what had been going on. The object of Dr. Owen's preface, which is long, is to shew from the evidence of this work, that the boasted unity of the Church of Rome, is an empty and false assumption; and that it would be easy to prove, that there is scarcely one point in which Papists differ from Protestants, on which they are agreed among themselves. He exposes the iniquitous policy and practice of the Romish Church in a very

[g] Works, vol. xix. p. 359.

masterly manner, and points out the insidious methods which it employed to crush the Jansenists. The sentiments of that party were nearly allied, on doctrinal subjects, to those of the Protestants, which was, no doubt, the chief reason of the ill treatment they received from Rome. Every thing from the pen of the author of the Court of the Gentiles, is worth reading; but most of his other pieces are now remarkably scarce. Among these are 'Theophilie; or the Saints' amity with God, 1671.' 'The Anatomy of Infidelity, 1672.' 'A Discourse of the coming of Christ, 1673.' 'Idea Theologiæ, tam contemplativae quam activae, 1673.' 'Philosophia Generalis, in duas partes, &c. 1676.' 'A summary of the two Covenants, 1678.'

'*Clavis Cantici*, or an Exposition of the Song of Solomon, by James Durham, late minister at Glasgow,' 4to. 1669. Wood says, Owen wrote the Preface to this work, which was printed after the death of the worthy author. Of this, however, I am doubtful, as the preface is anonymous, does not appear to be Owen's style, and as he wrote a preface to another work by Durham, which will be noticed immediately, it is probable Wood mistook the one for the other. The *Clavis* of Mr. Durham is still a popular book among that class of persons who study the mystical design of the Song, and who are fond of allegorical interpretation; but those who adhere to the rigid principles of Biblical criticism, will not be satisfied with many parts of this exposition.

'An Introduction to the Holy Scriptures, &c. by Henry Lukin, 1669. 12mo.' The author of this small work was a minister in Essex before the Act of Uniformity, which threw him among the Dissenters. He was the writer of several small practical works, which discover an excellent spirit. The 'Introduction' contains many useful things for the understanding of the Scriptures, but has long since been superseded. The substance of it, indeed, is a translation and abridgment of part of the Philologia Sacra of Glassius, to which Mr. Lukin acknowledges his obligations. I may take this opportunity of recommending that valuable work to the theological inquirer, as containing a treasure of Biblical criticism. The last edition, accommodated by Dathe to the present state of Hebrew literature, ought to be possessed by every student of the word of God. Dr. Owen ex-

presses his high approbation of Lukin's Introduction, and the great satisfaction which he derived from the perusal of it. 'If other readers find the same satisfaction with myself, as to the order, method, perspicuity, and sound judgment in them all, that the author hath employed and exercised in the whole; they will conclude that he hath acquitted himself as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.' Mr. Lukin died in 1719, at the advanced age of 92.

In 1671, a preface signed J. O. appeared to 'The freeness of the grace and love of God to believers, by W. Bridge.' The treatise is the substance of seven sermons, the sentiments of which are good, but the language quaint, and sometimes low. The preface glances at the attempt to make the author ridiculous, by satirising his homely phraseology. This roused the indignation of Dr. John Echard, who in a letter to Dr. Owen, treats the Doctor with contempt, and Mr. Bridge with scurrility. 'As I always looked upon Mr. B.' says he, 'to be very sickly and crazy, so I think you are stark mad for being an occasion that any such sermons as these should be sent into the world.' It so happened, however, that Dr. Owen was not the writer of this preface; for in his epistle to Caryl's sermons, he declares that he should have known nothing of the book, had not his accuser pointed it out to him. Dr. Echard in consequence left out of the next edition of his work, the letter to J. O. Mr. Bridge was one of the Independent brethren of the Assembly, and minister of a congregation at Yarmouth, where he died in 1670. The other writings of the author, shew that he was capable of producing something of more value, both in matter and form, than these sermons.

'Sermons on the whole Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians, by Mr. Daille, translated into English by F. S. with Dr. Thomas Goodwin's, and Dr. John Owen's Epistles recommendatory, 1672. fol.' The author of this work was minister of the Reformed Church at Paris, and is now known chiefly as the author of a work on the 'Right use of the Fathers,' which is one of the ablest treatises on the Popish controversy, and gave the church of Rome more trouble than most books of the period. Of this work, Bishop Warburton, who was no mean judge on such a subject, affirms, 'It may truly be said to be the storehouse,

from whence all who have since written popularly on the character of the Fathers, have derived their materials.'—(Introduction to Julian. vii.) Daille wrote a series of discourses on the 3d chapter of John, and on the 10th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians—besides this series on the Epistle to the Colossians, which is the only portion of his sermons rendered into English. Both Goodwin and Owen express their favourable opinion of the sentiments and useful tendency of the work.

In 1673, he introduced, with a preface, an edition of Vavasor Powell's 'New and useful Concordance to the Holy Bible.' This edition contained about 9000 Scriptures omitted in the former editions. It is but a small work, and furnishes only the principal word in the sentence. Of the usefulness of such works it is not necessary to speak, and all former Concordances in English have been so long set aside by the invaluable work of Cruden, that former labourers in this department of knowledge are now almost forgotten. Powell was a laborious Baptist minister in Wales, where he suffered much on account of his sentiments. He died in 1670, in the eleventh year of his imprisonment, and the fifty-third of his age.—(Crosby, vol. i. p. 373.) Owen was very much offended to find that no sooner had he produced the preface, than it was published that he had completed the work, whereas he declares he neither added to, nor altered a syllable of it. (Preface to Caryl's Sermons.)

'The Divine will considered in its eternal decrees, and holy execution of them, by Edward Polhill,' 8vo. 1673. Of this excellent person, I expected to have been able to furnish some account, but all my inquiries respecting him have failed. 'He was a very learned gentleman, and a justice of the peace, of very great esteem among all men in his own county, where he lived in full and constant communion with the church of England.—He was zealously concerned for truth and serious religion, not for a party. On all occasions he shewed himself to be of a truly Christian, that is of a catholic temper, and was a sincere lover of all good men.'—(Address to the reader prefixed to his posthumous discourse of Schism.) This work was published in 1694; so that he must have died before. In a preface to the work on the Divine will, by

Dr. Lazarus Seaman, Mr. Polhill is represented as one of the sages of the law, and an oracle in the country where he lives; as conformable himself, yet minding the power of godliness, more than the form thereof; and as eminent for his domestic piety, and exemplary conduct.

From Owen's preface, it appears that he was unacquainted with Polhill when he wrote it. He expresses his great respect for the author, though 'otherwise utterly unknown to him;' a respect which 'was increased when he found he was no minister or churchman; but a gentleman actuated by a voluntary concern for truth and piety.' 'The argumentative part of the book,' he says, 'is generally suited to the genius of the past age, wherein accuracy and strictness of reason bore sway, the language of it to this.' Before his death the author had lost his sight, as appears from a very excellent letter dictated by him to a friend, inserted in the Congregational Magazine, for 1819—p. 693. The work to which Owen writes a preface, seems to have been the first production of Mr. Polhill's pen. His next work was his 'Answer to Sherlock,' on the Communion controversy, and in defence of Owen, 1675. The same year he produced 'Precious faith considered in its nature, working, and growth.' 8vo. In 1678, appeared by him, '*Speculum Theologiae in Christo:* or a view of some Divine truths,' &c. 4to. He published '*Christus in Corde:* or the mystical union between Christ and Believers,' 8vo. 1680. In 1682, he produced '*Armatura Dei:* or preparation for suffering,' 8vo. This is an excellent and well written practical treatise; and the last which the author lived to publish. The work on the Decrees, which Owen prefaced, shews how far Polhill entered into the Calvinistic views of Christian doctrine; and discovers more than ordinary ability in defending them. It was highly esteemed by the late Dr. Williams of Rotherham, with whose sentiments on various points it nearly accords. All Polhill's works are valuable, and deserve a place in every theological library.

'The nature and principles of love as the end of the commandment; declared in some of the last sermons of Mr. Joseph Caryl; with an epistle prefixed by John Owen, D. D.' 12mo. 1673. These discourses were taken down from the mouth of Mr. Caryl by a hearer, and therefore appear with more than the ordinary disadvantages of posthumous writ-

ings. The prefatory epistle of Dr. Owen is chiefly occupied in defending himself against some of the many slanders which were then propagated against him. Some notice has been taken of these, and of the Doctor's answers to them, in other parts of this work.

In 1674, he wrote a preface to the *eleventh* edition of Scudder's 'Christian's Daily Walk.' The Author was sometime pastor of a Church in Collingborn-ducis, in Wiltshire; and the work was one of the most popular practical treatises among the Non-conformists of the seventeenth century. Dr. Owen states that he had first read it above thirty years before, and that the impressions made upon him in his youth continued in grateful remembrance upon his mind. There is also a prefatory recommendation by Baxter, who speaks of it in still stronger terms of eulogy. The book is still known and esteemed by pious persons of the old school; and were the sentiments and precepts with which it abounds more attended to, the interests of pure and undefiled religion would be promoted. This work was translated into Dutch, by Theodore Haak.

'The difference between the Old and New Covenant, stated and explained: by Samuel Petto, Minister of the Gospel,' 12mo. 1674. This is a very excellent little work, which the Doctor, in a pretty long preface, warmly recommends to the attentive perusal of the reader. Much perplexing and unmeaning language has been used about the Covenants of God; and though Mr. Petto's treatise is not altogether free from it, its leading views are scriptural and consolatory. The author was ejected from the living of Sandcroft in Suffolk, and afterwards became pastor of a Congregation at Sudbury. His grandson was minister of the Church in Coggeshall, which Owen founded.

'The Surest and Safest way of Thriving, by Thos. Gouge,' 1674. This little, but valuable work, has no less than four prefaces, by Owen, Manton, Baxter, and Bates. It contains many excellent things on the nature and good effects of Christian liberality, with illustrations of its beneficial results even in this world, to those who exercise it. The respectable author, who was one of the ejected ministers, was an eminent example of the virtue he recommended to others. His personal property, which was originally consi-

derable, he devoted almost entirely to works of benevolence and mercy. The four prefacers all speak of the author and the work in the strongest manner.

'The Best Treasure, or the way to be made truly rich, by Bartholomew Ashwood,' 167–.' I know not the year in which the first edition, with Owen's Preface, appeared. It is a discourse on Ephesians iii. 8. in which the unsearchable riches of Christ are explained and recommended to saints and sinners, as the best treasure to all who would be happy here and hereafter. The Doctor says, 'the most learned will find nothing in it to be despised, and the generality of believers will meet with that which will be to their use and advantage.' Mr. Ashwood was ejected from Axminster, in Devonshire; and is represented by Calamy, as a judicious, godly, and laborious Divine.

'The Law Unsealed, or a Practical Exposition of the Ten Commandments. By James Durham, late Minister of the Gospel at Glasgow.' 8vo. Edin. 1676. This is the third edition of the work, to which prefaces by Mr. Jenkyn and Dr. Owen are prefixed, for the first time. It is a more satisfactory book than the one on Solomon's Song; as the ground on which its author treads is more solid, and the practical tendency of the exposition more evident. Owen praises the work for its plainness, for its general adaptation to the circumstances of Christians, and for the constant attention which the author pays to the inward principle as well as to the outward conduct. It discovers much knowledge of the word of God, and of the character and state of man. Mr. Durham was a useful and highly respectable minister in his day.

'The Ark of the Covenant Opened: or a treatise of the Covenant of Redemption, between God and Christ, as the foundation of the Covenant of Grace, &c. By a Minister of the New Testament,' 4to. 1677. The author of this work was Mr. Patrick Gillespie, one of the Ministers of Glasgow, and Principal of the University during the Commonwealth. Wodrow says, 'he was blamed for his compliances with the Usurper, and there is no doubt he was the minister in Scotland who had the greatest sway with the English when they ruled here, yea almost the only Presbyterian minister who was in with them.'—(Hist. of the Church of Scotland, vol. i.

p. 76.) On this account, it is probable, Owen and he had first become acquainted. The Doctor, in his preface, speaks of 'his long Christian acquaintance and friendship with the author;' who was dead before this work appeared. It is only a small part of the design which he had formed, and indeed prepared, for the press. The work, though scarcely known, contains a large portion of scriptural knowledge and good sense, and is fully entitled to all the commendation which Owen bestows on it.

'A Practical Discourse of God's Sovereignty, with other material points, &c. by Elisha Coles,' 1678. This is the production of a person who never enjoyed the benefit of a learned education, and who had no knowledge of any language but English. He appears to have been the friend of Dr. Goodwin, who, in a preface, bears testimony to the character of the author, founded on a knowledge of him for twenty-eight years. The other preface is subscribed by Dr. Owen and Sam. Annesley. It must have galled John Wesley exceedingly to perceive that his grandfather, for whom he had a very high respect, was the patron of one of the most Calvinistic books ever published. The reading of this work, Dr. Kippis says, occasioned his first renunciation of Calvinism.—(Biog. Brit. vol. iv. p. 3.) The substance of the work, I have no doubt, is scriptural; but it is neither an accurate nor a guarded book, and by no means fit to be put into the hands of an inquirer. The author does not limit sovereignty sufficiently to the exercise of benevolence; and thus leaves it exposed to very formidable objections. An enlightened Christian, however, may derive much comfort and instruction from it. Those who wish to see the subject stated in the best and most delightful manner will be amply gratified by consulting a sermon, entitled 'Spiritual Blessings,' &c. 1814, by the Rev. Joseph Fletcher.

'The Glory of Free Grace Displayed, by Stephen Lob,' 12mo. 1680. To this Treatise a preface was written by Dr. Owen, at the request of Mr. Lob, to vindicate the Independents from the charge of Antinomianism, and from being supporters of Crisp's errors, which about this time were making sad havoc among the Dissenters. The preface, however, says little directly on the subject, farther than expressing the Doctor's opinion of the work, and his approba-

tion of Mr. Lob's character and ministry. The performance itself, is, on the whole, a judicious one, very far removed from Antinomianism, and points out very plainly some of Dr. Crisp's most pernicious mistakes respecting sin, grace, election, imputation, &c.; but which the modern Antinomians with an equal disregard of Scripture, common sense, and all that has been previously written, go on fearlessly to repeat. The sentiments of Owen were certainly widely different from Antinomianism; but I do regret that he should have lent his name to certain productions, whose tendency that way is by no means obscure.

'The Holy Bible, with Annotations and Parallel Scriptures, &c. by Samuel Clark, fol. 1690.' There is a preface by Dr. Owen, dated Feb. 14th, 1683. Another by Baxter, and a joint preface by Bates, and Howe. The author was a man of learning, piety, and diligence; and all the prefacers speak highly of the Annotations. They are exceedingly short, but for the most part very judicious. The Parallel Scriptures are selected with much care; and were it not superseded by more extensive works, this Bible might still be useful.

Besides these published prefaces, the Doctor wrote a commendatory preface to Ness's Antidote to Arminianism, of which the author speaks, though he does not give it. Augustine Plumsted, an ejected minister, and afterwards pastor of the Congregational Church at Wrentham, in Suffolk, compiled, with great labour, a double Concordance, containing the English and also the Hebrew and Greek words of the Bible. A prospectus and specimen were published, and an attestation to the merits of the work annexed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other distinguished persons. Dr. Owen also wrote an epistle to be prefixed to it; but the work never appeared, either from want of patronage, or from the death of the author.—(Calamy's Cont. vol. ii. pp. 806. 809.)

FAMILY OF OWEN.

Dr. Calamy mentions, that Mr. John Singleton, pastor of the Independent Church, which was originally formed by Philip Nye, and in which Mr. Neal was afterwards minister, was nephew to Dr. Owen. It is probable, therefore, that Owen had more than one sister, though I can procure no account of Mr. Singleton's parents. It appears that he was educated at Christ Church, Oxford, during the period of his Uncle's residence in the University; and that he lost his student's place at the Restoration. After this, he went to Holland and studied medicine, which he occasionally practised. After his return, he lived with Lady Scot in Hertfordshire, and preached to some Dissenters in Hertford. He was also at Stretton, and Coventry, and finally removed to London, to an Old Independent Church, in which he was pastor from 1698, to 1706. He kept also an Academy at Hoxton and Islington. In the Britannia Rediviva, Oxon 1660, there is an English poem by him; and one Sermon in the Continuation of the Morning Exercises, On the best way to prepare to meet God in the way of his judgments or mercies.—(Calamy's Continuation, Vol. I. p. 105.—Wilson's Diss. Churches, Vol. III. pp. 89, 90.)

On a black stone Pavement of Remnam Church, where William Owen, eldest brother to the Doctor, was minister, there is a Latin Inscription, perpetuating his name, and which describes him, as 'Humillimus Evangelii Christi Minister.'—It mentions that he died on the 16th of the 4th month, A. D. 1660, ætat 41; and also that an infant son of William, died the 10th day of the 7th month, 1654, aged 3 months. Below, are six Latin verses on the death of the child.

THE SYNOD OF DORT.

The Synod of Dort and its proceedings, occupied a considerable portion of attention, during the early part of the seventeenth century. The accounts which have been given of it are very various. While I entertain no doubt in general, respecting the doctrinal sentiments which it maintained, I as firmly believe, that little good resulted from its

conduct and decisions. These were too much influenced by party politics to have weight with opposers; and some of its proceedings and their consequences, were highly improper. Brandt, who gives the fullest account of the Synod, was a Remonstrant, and must therefore be read with caution. Helyn's violent anti-calvinistic, and anti-presbyterian prejudices, gave a decided colouring to all his statements respecting it, both in his Quinquarticular history and his history of the Presbyterians. The best account, as far as it goes, is that furnished by Hales of Eaton, who was secretary to the English Ambassador then at the Hague. Even *his* letters by no means prepossess us in the Synod's favour. He thus introduces the last of them :—' Our Synod goes on like a watch, the main wheels upon which the whole business turns, are least in sight; for all things of moment, are acted in private sessions; what is done in public, is only for show and entertainment.' (Hales' works, Vol. III. p. 148.) In the '*Acta Synodi Dordrechti,*' published by the Synod, and the '*Acta et Scripta Synodalia Remonstrantium,*' all the documents on both sides will be found. But the former is a large folio, and the latter a thick quarto, which few have either time or inclination to consult. An abstract of the former was published in English in 1818, by the Rev. Thomas Scott; on which a very smart critique appeared in the Eclectic Review, for Dec. 1819; which well deserves the attention of the reader.

WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

A DISPASSIONATE and impartial History of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, is yet a desideratum. Lord Hailes observes, (Remarks on the History of Scotland, p. 236.) ' it would be a work curious and useful: it is probable, however, that we shall never see such a work; for the writer must be one who neither hates, nor contemns, nor admires that Assembly.' I do not know that there is so much ground for despondency on this subject, as his Lordship expresses. The materials for such a work are very ample. Lord Hailes mentions a Journal of the Assembly, drawn up by Mr. George Gillespie, one of the Scots Commissioners, among the Wodrow MSS. It begins 2d Feb. 164$\frac{4}{5}$, and proceeds to the

14th May, 1645. There is then a blank. It recommences 4th September, 1645, and proceeds to 25th Oct. 1645. Baillie's Journals and Letters contain much important and authentic information. The printed pamphlets of the period are exceedingly numerous, and many of them curious. The lives of the members of the Assembly, also throw light on its sentiments and proceedings. It is generally reported, that the minutes of the Assembly are deposited in the Red Cross Street Library; but I suspect this is a mistake. Dr. Thomas Goodwin, one of the Dissenting brethren, is said to have left notes of its transactions in 14 or 15 small volumes. —(Palmer's Non-Con. Mem. vol. i. p. 239.) What has become of these volumes does not appear. There is in the Red Cross Street Library, a MS. supposed to be the minutes of the Assembly. This MS. is in three thick volumes folio, which appear to have been bound uniformly, about the beginning of the last century. On turning them over, they appear to contain each four or five distinct series of notes. Goodwin's notes were in small volumes, the MS. is in folio. I do not think it is the Minute book of the Assembly. It is worth inquiring, whether the minutes are not in the Library of Sion College.

Very different accounts have been given of the Assembly. Baxter's and Neal's opinions of it are highly favourable; those of Clarendon, and other high church writers, quite the opposite. Lord Hailes, in the work already quoted, gives a curious extract from Gillespie's MS. of the Assembly's statement of its own sins, with a view to a solemn fast. '*The sins of the Assembly in nine points.* 1. Neglecting attendance in the Assembly, though the affairs be so important; late coming. 2. Absence from the prayers. 3. Reading and talking in time of debates. 4. Neglect of committees. 5. Some speak too much, others too little. 6. Indecent behaviour. 7. Unseemly language and heats upon it. 8. Neglect of trying ministers. 9. Members of Assembly drawing on parties, or being frightened with needless jealousies.' p. 239. Milton's account of the Assembly is exceedingly severe, and evidently written under strong feelings of irritation, excited by the Assembly's hostility to religious liberty. —(Milton's History of England, quoted in Symmon's Life of Milton, p. 401.)

THE EARLY STATE OF INDEPENDENCY IN IRELAND.

I HAVE been able to glean only a few particulars respecting the first appearances of Independency in Ireland. Some of the Brownists are said to have reached Ireland, and there to have left some disciples. In 1650, Dr. Samuel Winter went over with four parliamentary commissioners. He relinquished a living of £400 per annum, in England, for an appointment of £100 that he might promote the interests of the Gospel in Ireland. He was made Provost of Trinity College, which he found almost desolate and forsaken; but which, under his care, became a valuable seminary of piety and learning. He was pastor of an Independent church in Dublin, at the same time. The Restoration drove him from the College, and from Ireland.—(Calamy, vol. ii. pp. 544. 546.) Dr. Thomas Harrison went over with Henry Cromwell, and preached for several years in Christ Church, Dublin. He returned to England a short time before the Restoration, but afterwards went back to Dublin, where he died, lamented by the whole city. Lord Thomond used to say of him, 'that he would rather hear Dr. Harrison say grace over an egg, than hear the Bishops pray and preach.'—(Ibid. vol. ii. p. 122.) Mr. Stephen Charnock went over at the same time with Dr. Harrison, and usually had persons of the greatest distinction for his hearers. He returned about 1660.—(Noncon. Mem. vol. i. p. 208.) Mr. Samuel Mather also went over about the same time, and became colleague with Dr. Winter. He preached every Lord's day morning at the church of St. Nicholas; and, once every six weeks, before the Lord Deputy and his council. Though an Independent, even Wood acknowledges he was a man of much moderation, and civil to Episcopalians even when he had the power of injuring them. When the Deputy gave a commission to him and others to displace the Episcopal clergy of the provinces of Munster and Dublin, he declined acting, alleging that he had come to Ireland to preach the Gospel, not to hinder others from doing it. He had before preached for two years in Leith. He died in Dublin in 1671.—(Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 355. 357.) Hugh Peters went with the army of Cromwell to Ireland, but soon returned to England. Of

this man, who has been the object of incessant reproach, and whose character has been loaded with every crime, I may be permitted to speak a little good. He resided five years at Salem, in New England, during which the rapid improvement made in the place, is ascribed to him. 'The arts were introduced; a water-mill was erected: a glass-house; salt works; the planting of hemp was encouraged, and a regular market was established. An almanack was introduced to direct their affairs. Commerce had unexampled glory. He formed the plan of the fishery; of the coasting voyages; of the foreign voyages, and, among many other vessels, one of 300 tons was undertaken under his influence.'—(Holmes' American Annals, vol. i. p. 263.) Such was his influence in Holland, where he had resided for some time, that he raised £30,000 in it, for the relief of the suffering Protestants in Ireland. He was also a diligent and earnest solicitor for the distressed Protestants in the vallies of Piedmont.—(Ludlow, vol. iii. p. 61.) These things are not like the actions of a fool or a profligate. 'I travelled into Germany,' he says, 'with that famous Scotsman, Mr. John Forbes, and enjoyed in him, for about six years, much love and sweetness; from whom I never had but encouragement, though we differed in the way of our churches. The learned Amesius breathed his last into my bosom, who left his professorship, in Friezland, to live with me, because of my church's independency, at Rotterdam. He was my colleague and chosen brother to the church, where I was an unworthy pastor.'—(Peters' Last Report of the English wars, 1646.) His Legacy to his daughter breathes the spirit of Christianity, and solemnly professes his innocence of the grievous charges which were heaped upon him; and his conduct on the scaffold fully supported the previous heroism of his character. But Peters was a soldier, as well as a preacher of Christianity; and, for violating, by this improper combination, the principles of his Master's kingdom, he, perhaps, brought on himself the execution of his Master's threatening;—'They that take the sword shall perish by the sword.'

John Rogers was pastor of a church in Dublin, of which Colonel Hewson, the governor of Dublin, was a member. John Byewater, and Thomas Huggins, preachers of the Word, joined this church in 1651. (Roger's Tabernacle for the Sun,

p. 302.) From the same book it appears, there was a Baptist church at Waterford, which addresses a letter to the saints in Dublin on that subject, signed by twelve persons. Of this church, Mr. Thomas Patient was minister; he was some time co-pastor of the Baptist church in London with Mr. Kiffin; he went over to Ireland with General Fleetwood, and usually preached in the Cathedral. He was very active in promoting the interests of the Baptists; and Crosby thinks, was the founder of a Baptist church in Cloughkeating, which became very numerous. (Crosby's Baptists, vol. iii. pp. 42, 43.) From Ivimey's History of the Baptists, (vol. i. p. 240.) it appears that there were Baptist churches in Dublin, Waterford, Clonmell, Kilkenny, Cork, Limerick, Galloway, Wexford, besides disciples in other places. They do not appear to have been numerous, but seem to have had some active men among them. Mr. John Murcot removed from West Kerby to Ireland, and was very useful the short time he lived. He preached generally in Dublin, and for some time in Cork; where he assisted at a public dispute on the subject of Baptism, in which he and Dr. Worth were on the one side, and Dr. Harding on the other.—(Murcot's Life, prefixed to his works.)

There was a church in Youghall, in which Mr. Joseph Eyres laboured for some time; and afterwards removed to a church in Cork.—(Ibid.) Mr. Timothy Taylor, pastor of a church at Duckenfield in Cheshire, went to Ireland, and became pastor of a church in Carrickfergus. At the Restoration, he removed from the parochial edifice, and preached the Gospel in his own hired house to all who came to him In 1668, he went to Dublin, and became colleague, first to Mr. Samuel Mather, and at his death, to his brother Nathaniel Mather, till his death.—(Athen. Oxon. vol. ii. p. 508.) In 1655, Claudius Gilbert, pastor of a Congregational church in Limerick, Edward Reynolds, Min. and J. Warren, Min. &c. unite with Dr. Winter in a letter to Mr. Baxter, as the associated Ministers of Christ in Ireland.—(Baxter's Life, part i. p. 107.) Mr. Jenner also was pastor of a church in Tredagh.—(Ibid.) These few particulars may perhaps induce some, whose information is more extensive than mine, to pursue the subject, and communicate the results.

THE EARLY STATE OF INDEPENDENCY IN SCOTLAND.

In the year 1584, Robert Brown, from whom the first Independents derived their designation, came out of the Low Countries into Scotland with a number of his followers. Having taken up his residence in the Canongate of Edinburgh, he began to disseminate his peculiar opinions, and to circulate writings, in which all the reformed churches were stigmatized as unscriptural and Antichristian societies. The Court took this rigid sectary under their protection, and encouraged him, for no other conceivable reason, than his exclaiming against the ministers, and calling in question their authority. On his return to England, Brown published a book, into which he introduced various invectives against the ministers and government of the Church of Scotland.—(Calderwood, quoted by M'Crie in his Life of Melville, vol. i. p. 326.) King James, in his Basilicon Doron, alleges that Brown, Penry, and other Englishmen, had, when in Scotland, 'sown their popple,' and that 'certain brain-sick, and heady preachers,' had imbibed their spirit; although, adds Dr. M'Crie, he could not but know that these rigid sectaries were unanimously opposed by the Scottish ministers, and that the only countenance which they received, was from himself and his courtiers.—(Ibid. vol. ii. p. 163.)

In 1591, Penry, who afterwards suffered in England, retired to Scotland for safety; and continued there till 1593. From thence he addressed two letters to Queen Elizabeth, not couched in very courtly terms, and the petition, for which he was executed.—(Brook's Lives, vol. ii. p. 50.—Paget's Heresiography, pp. 271—275.)

The next account we have of Independents in Scotland, brings us down to about the year 1642. 'About this time there came in quietly to Aberdeen, one called Othro Ferrendail, an Irishman, and a skinner to his calling, favoured by Mr. Andrew Cant, and by his moyan (means) admitted freeman. He was trapped for preaching on the night in some houses of the town before their families, with close doors, nocturnal doctrine or Brownism.'—(Spalding's History of the Troubles in Scotland, vol. ii. pp. 45, 46.) Ferrendail was, perhaps, a disciple of Ainsworth's, who, according to

Hornbeck,—(Sum. Con. p. 740.) visited Ireland. Mr. Cant was one of the ministers of Aberdeen, and more favourable to innovation than some of his brethren. In the provincial assembly at Aberdeen, 1642, there was 'great business about Brownism lately crept into Aberdeen and other parts.' Besides Ferrendail, William Maxwell, Thomas Pont, Gilbert Gordon of Tilliefroskie, his wife, children, and servants, and hail family, and John Ross, minister of Birse, were complained of. Mr. John Oswald also, one of the ministers of Aberdeen, was thought not to dislike it.—(Spalding, vol. ii. p. 52.) Ferrendail was got to abjure and subscribe the covenant, and was 'received as a good Bairn.'—(Ibid. 64.) The Presbytery, however, were not satisfied with Ferrendail's repentance, and referred him to the General Assembly.—(Ibid. 68.) 'Maxwell, who was also accused of Brownism, was a silly wheel-wright to his calling; this man was sought for, and all men forbidden out of the pulpit to receive him, which was done by our minister, Mr. William Strachan, upon Sunday the 5th of February.'—(Ibid. p. 70.) Gordon, of Tilliefroskie, was taken afterwards on the streets of Edinburgh, and put in prison for maintaining some points of Brownism.—(Ibid. p. 102.)

The General Assembly of 1647, passed an Act prohibiting the importation of all books and pamphlets containing Independency, and Anabaptism, and forbidding reading the same; or harbouring any persons infected with such errors. Presbyteries and Synods are enjoined to process such as shall offend against these injunctions: and civil magistrates are recommended to aid and assist ministers in every thing to that effect.—(Acts of Assemblies from 1638 to 1649, printed in Edin. 1682.) These were the blessed days of Presbyterian supremacy; and such was the use which they made of their power.

The English army entering Scotland soon after this, prevented the execution of this unjust law, and imported Independency in such a way as could not be resisted. Many of the officers and soldiers of the army were preachers, and ambulatory churches existed among the troops, in which Independency was both preached and exhibited. Nicholas Lockyer, who accompanied the English army, published at Leith, a small work on Independency: 'A little Stone out of the Mountain, or Church order briefly opened,

1652.' It has an Epistle dedicatory, dated from Dalkeith, April 22, 1652, by Joseph Caryl, John Oxenbridge, and Cuthbert Sydenham. It was answered by James Wood, professor of Theology in St. Andrews.—'A little Stone, pretended to be out of the Mountain, tried and found to be a Counterfeit,' 4to. Edin. 1654. From Wood's work, it appears that some 'ministers and others in Aberdeen,' had forsaken the church, and adopted the principles of Independency. In 1653, was printed at Leith, 'A Confession of Faith of the Baptist Churches in London;' the preface to which is dated 'Leith, the tenth of the first month, vulgarly called March, and signed by Thomas Spenser, Alex. Holmes, Thomas Powell, John Brady, in the name and by the appointment of the Church of Christ, usually meeting at Leith and Edinburgh.'

In July, 1652, the English Commissioners presented to the General Assembly, 'A Declaration in favour of Congregational Discipline, purity of Communion, and Toleration;' to which the Assembly replied rather indignantly.—(Whitelocke, pp. 514, 515.) A number of the protesting ministers seem to have been somewhat favourable to Independency; among the chief of whom was Mr. Patrick Gillespie. An Independent was settled in Kilbride, and another of the name of Charters in Kirkintilloch.—(Sewel's History of the Quakers, p. 94.)

In 1659, the Presbytery of Edinburgh, published 'A Testimony and Warning against a late Petition;' the object of which was to procure the 'abolishing of all civil sanctions establishing the doctrine, discipline, and government of this Church,' p. 4. This Warning produced 'Some sober Animadversions to Vindicate the Truth, and undeceive the Simple,' 1659. From this pamphlet it appears, that several persons for dissenting from the Church Courts had been very cruelly and iniquitously used. Christian Blyth, a Baptist, Mrs. Adair, Gordon of Tilliefroskie, Mr. Tayes, and Mr. Flint, are referred to, as 'excommunicated, imprisoned, banished, hunted from place to place, to the loss of all they had, and the making of their very lives bitter,' pp. 11, 12. Col. Strachan also, and Lord Swinton, Mr. Dundas, Major Abernethy, and Captain Griffin, were treated much in the same way, according to this account, for no other crime than that of being reckoned sectaries. It is a very excellent

pamphlet, and written probably by some of the persons who had been ill used.

These facts embrace almost every thing known to me respecting the first appearances of Independency in Scotland. With the return of the army to England, and the Restoration, all traces of it disappeared; and the people of Scotland were soon called to encounter more terrible calamities, from a quarter from which they expected nothing but happiness. I offer no commentary on the facts brought forward: every enlightened Christian will form a decided opinion respecting both parties; and what would have been the probable consequences of the establishment of Presbyterian uniformity in England.

OWEN'S SUCCESSORS IN COGGESHALL.

His immediate successor was Constantine Jessop, son of Mr. John Jessop, minister of Pembroke, educated at Oxford. He did not remain long at Coggeshall, but removed first to Wimborn in Dorsetshire, and then to Tyfield, in Essex, where he died in 1660.—(Brook's Lives of the Puritans, vol. iii. p. 375.) He was succeeded by Mr. John Samms, who had been educated in New England. The Act of Uniformity ejected him from the parish living; but he gathered a separate church in it, of those who approved of his ministry, of which he died pastor about 1675.—(Non-con. Mem. vol. ii. p. 191.) Mr. Thomas Browning, of Rowel, was a member of this church in his time, and was encouraged by him to enter into the ministry. To him, Owen gave a very important advice, which he appears to have followed himself. 'Study things, acceptable words will follow.'—(Ibid. vol. iii. p. 271.) He was succeeded by Mr. Robert Gouge, of Christ College, Cambridge. He had preached, and taught a school, for some time at Malden, in Essex. From thence he removed to Ipswich, where he was silenced. He laboured at Coggeshall till laid aside by the decay of his intellects, but in what year this took place, is uncertain. Edward Bently was pastor of the church in 1721, and died on the 9th of June, 1740, in the 60th year of his age. I know not what year he entered into office in Coggeshall, or whether there was any

one between Mr. Gouge and him. Mr. John Farmer, brother to the celebrated Hugh Farmer, was ordained pastor, March 28th, 1739. His mother was daughter of Mr. Hugh Owen, one of the ejected ministers, and he received, it is probable, as his brother did, his classical education from Dr. Charles Owen, of Warrington, and prosecuted his academical studies afterwards under Dr. Doddridge. In 1730, he was chosen assistant to Mr. Rawlin, at Fetter-lane, and continued in that situation till he removed to Coggeshall. He published a volume of Sermons in 1756, which possess some merit, but are now little known. In consequence of mental derangement, he was rendered incapable of any stated ministerial service, and several years before his death retired to London. He is said to have a been a very excellent Greek scholar.—(Life of Hugh Farmer, and Wilson's Hist. of Diss. Churches, vol. iii. p. 457.)

It is uncertain in what year Mr. Henry Petto succeeded Mr. Farmer; but he died in 1776, or 1777. Mr. Mordecai Andrews was ordained about 1774, and died at Southampton, in September, 1799. Mr. J. Fielding went to Coggeshall in 1797. In his time, a very unpleasant difference took place between the church and him, in consequence of which, some pamphlets were published;—the church books were lost, which has prevented me from obtaining more particular information of the state of the church during the last century; and Mr. Fielding was finally necessitated to retire. Mr. Algernon Wells, from Hoxton academy, went to Coggeshall, in 1818, and was ordained to the pastoral office on the 7th of April, 1819. The church and congregation are again in a promising state.

OWEN'S SUCCESSORS IN BURY STREET.

The Doctor's immediate successor was his colleague, Mr. Clarkson, who died in 1686. Isaac Loeffs, who had been colleague for some time with Mr. Clarkson, succeeded him as sole pastor, and died in 1689. Of both these excellent men, we have already given some account. The next pastor was Isaac Chauncey, eldest son of the venerable President of Harvard College, in New England. In his time the church fell off exceedingly, owing to his want of popularity as a

preacher, and his preaching often on the subject of Church Order. He resigned his office in the church in 1701, and was soon after appointed tutor of the Independent Academy, which still exists at Homerton, and which has numbered among its tutors and pupils some of the most learned of the English dissenters. In this situation Dr. Chauncey remained till his death. He edited some of Owen's posthumous writings, and published several things of his own.

His successor was Dr. Isaac Watts, whose history requires no illustration, and whose name admits not of eulogy from me. Mr. Edward Terry had been assistant for a time to Dr. Chauncey. Before Dr. Watts had been long in the ministry he was attacked by a painful and lingering illness, which rendered assistance absolutely necessary. Mr. Samuel Price was therefore chosen to this office; and acted as assistant and co-pastor for more than forty years. Dr. Watts died in 1748, and Mr. Price in 1756. It is praise enough to say that he was worthy of being united in office with Watts. During the latter years of his life he was assisted by Meredith Townshend; and was succeeded by Samuel Morton Savage, D. D. a man of learning and high respectability, but not very successful as a preacher. He was tutor for many years of the academy formerly at Hoxton, now removed to Wymondley. He preached only in the mornings at Bury Street, and was assisted in the afternoons, first, by Mr. Thomas Porter, and afterwards by Mr. Josiah Thompson. The congregation, in 1782, was reduced to a very low state, when it invited Mr. Beck, the present minister, to succeed Dr. Savage. There is a good endowment belonging to the church; which has now removed from the meeting-house, which is occupied by a different congregation.—(Wilson's Hist. of the Diss. Churches, vol. i. pp. 251. 328.) In referring to this work, I beg here to acknowledge my occasional obligations to it. While I bear testimony to the curious and interesting information which it contains, I cannot help expressing my astonishment at the little support it has received from the body on whose history it has bestowed so much labour; and my hope that the respectable author will yet be encouraged to lay the fifth volume before the public, which, I understand, has long since been fully prepared.

A

FUNERAL SERMON*

ON

DR. JOHN OWEN:

BY

DAVID CLARKSON, B. D.

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* This Sermon was preached the next Lord's day after the doctor's interment.

A

FUNERAL SERMON,

&c.

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.—Phil. iii. 21.

The occasion why I pitch upon these words at this time, you are not unacquainted with. The apostle in the beginning of this chapter, warns the Philippians to beware of false teachers, he enforceth this with several arguments, the principal of which are drawn from his own example, in the body of the chapter; and then he concludes it with an elegant antithesis, opposing them to himself, and those that faithfully follow Christ with him: he makes use of this to enforce the dissuasive in a subserviency to his main scope, ver. 19—21. 'Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things. But our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.' You may observe an antithesis in all this; they mind earthly things, but our conversation is in heaven; their god is their belly, but we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, their end is destruction, but our end is glory; their glory is shameful, they glory in their shame, but our glory shall be like that of our Lord Jesus Christ; that which they count most glorious, is shameful, but that which is vilest amongst us, shall be glorious: 'Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.'

The observation from hence is this:

Observ. The bodies of the saints shall be conformed, and made like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ.

The bodies of the saints, how vile soever now, shall at the resurrection be made and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. The apostle gives a particular ac-

count of this, 1 Cor. xv. which I may take notice of in some particulars afterward.

For the present, the great inquiry for the explaining of this truth is: how the bodies of deceased saints shall be like to the glorious body of Christ?

1. Negatively,

(1.) Not by any substantial change.

The substance of their bodies shall not be changed, as one of the ancients thought, by a mistake of the word *μετασχηματίσει* used here, inferring that the bodies of the saints at the resurrection, shall not be of the same substance as they are now, but they shall then have etherial bodies; whereas both the words *σχῆμα* and *μορφὴ* denote quality, a change in quality, not such a substantial change, as they imagined.

(2.) They shall be like, not equal.

The words do import a resemblance, not an equality, they shall not be equally glorious with the body of Christ. The Lord of glory in all things must have the pre-eminence, as he was 'anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows,' so he shall be exalted with greater glory. But then,

2. Positively: How shall they be fashioned like unto his glorious body?

You must not expect an exact account of this, it requires the tongue of an angel, or of some translated saint, that hath seen, and been invested with this glory, or hath had some full view of it. This is of the number of those things, we must believe though we see not, though we know not; it is an object of faith, not of sight, and so is incomprehensible to us, who walk by faith, not by sight. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for those that love him.' If this be true of what is offered us in the gospel, much more of what is reserved in glory. 'Now are we the sons of God,' saith the apostle, and it doth not appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is;' 1 John iii. 2. And who can describe that which doth not appear? Here 'we see but as in a glass, darkly,' we have but a dim sight, such a sight of the kingdom of glory, as the ancient people of God had of the kingdom of the

Messiah: 'Abraham saw his day afar off, and rejoiced.' The wisdom of God hath drawn a veil before that glory, and he hath drawn it in great wisdom. If so be we had the full discovery of that glory that shall be put upon the bodies of the saints (not to speak of that upon the soul) if we had the full discovery of it here upon earth, it would be as hard to persuade the saints to be content to live on earth, as it is to persuade the men of the world to die. As in judgment to them, so in mercy to us, the veil still remaineth upon us; but though the veil be not quite withdrawn, yet the Lord is pleased in the Scripture to lift up, as it were, a corner of the veil, that we may see some glimmerings of that glory which hereafter we shall see face to face, of which I shall give an account in some particulars.

The raised bodies of the saints shall be like the glorious body of Christ in these six or seven respects.

(1.) In respect of perfection, the body of Christ is perfect, so shall theirs be perfect, both in respect of parts, and degrees.

Their bodies shall have integrality of parts in exact proportion, there shall be no defect of members, no not of those that are now wanting; those that could find no remedy for lameness, or blindness, or mutilation on earth, shall find it in heaven; their bodies shall be raised in glory. So the apostle tells us, 1 Cor. xv. 43. 'It shall be a glorious body:' but it would not be so glorious if these imperfections and defects were not removed: and it shall have exact proportion too, there shall be no distinction in heaven between small and great; as there shall be no infant of days, so no decrepit old age, but all shall be reduced to a perfect stature, either to the stature of the first man Adam (for the resurrection shall be as a new creation) or to the stature of the Lord from heaven, as the apostle calls our Lord Jesus. There shall be a conformation to the image of the heavenly, and so shall not want its proportion. The word μορφὴ in the text, signifies 'outward form,' and σχῆμα denotes 'external figure.' Now there could be no resemblance of the body of Christ in external form and figure, without such proportions.

(2.) The bodies of the saints shall be like the glorious body of Christ, in respect of impassibleness.

The body of Christ is now impassible; that is, it is not

liable to any sufferings, and so shall the bodies of the saints be; they shall be secured from all hurtful impressions from without, and all distempers from within; there shall be no hunger, nor thirst, no pain, no sickness, nor suffering whatsoever; the body shall suffer no disturbance, no inconvenience from earthly melancholy, or from dull phlegm, or fiery choler, or from the levity of a sanguine humour, but all shall be brought to such an exact temperament, as shall place them above any sufferings imaginable. The body will not be passible, nor liable to corruption, or suffering; for that which is liable to suffering, is more or less liable to corruption, in whole, or in part; but the bodies of the saints will be incorruptible: "It is sown in corruption, but is raised in incorruption;' 1 Cor. xv. 42.; their bodies shall be secured from whatever may blemish their glory, or impair their perfection, or any way disorder the constitution of it.

(3.) The bodies of the saints shall be like the glorious body of Christ, in respect of immortality.

The body of Christ is immortal, as the apostle expresses it, Rom. vi. 9. 'Christ dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him;' so it shall be with the bodies of the saints, 'mortality shall then put on immortality,' as the apostle expresses it, 1 Cor. xv. 53. when the bodies of the saints shall be raised, they shall commence, take the degree of souls, that is, they shall be immortal; they shall be more secured from death in heaven, than our first parents, while innocent, were secure from death in paradise; there shall not only be a 'posse non mori,' 'a possibility not to die;' but a 'non posse mori,' 'an impossibility of dying,' and that not arising from the nature of the body, but from the decree and purpose of God, from the victory of Christ, and from an immunity from sin; 'Death shall then be swallowed up of victory;' death shall then lie under the feet of glorified ones, while they sing that song, 1 Cor. xv. 54—57. 'Death is swallowed up in victory: Oh, death where is thy sting! Oh, grave where is thy victory! The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

(4.) The bodies of the saints shall be like that glorious body of Christ, in respect of agility; that quickness, nimbleness, and wonderful celerity of glorified bodies, an in-

stance whereof we have in the ascent of Christ's body from earth to heaven. The distance between the highest heaven, and the earth, is computed by astronomers to be some hundred millions of miles, so that if he finished that distance in a day, and we have no reason to think it so long, his body must move some millions of miles in an hour. But not to insist upon that, the bodies of the saints shall move when, where, how, and as fast as the soul pleases, without any reluctancy, without any toil or trouble to the body. The body shall be then immediately subject to the soul, as the soul shall be subject to God: nor will this motion be any disturbance to them. For what one of the ancients saith of the angels, shall be true of the bodies of the saints: "Wherever they move, they move not out of the blessed presence, out of the inhappying presence of Christ."

(5.) The bodies of the saints shall be like the glorious body of Christ, in respect of spirituality.

The body of Christ is now a spiritual body, not that it is changed into the nature of a spirit: Christ prevents that mistake, Luke xxiv. 39. 'Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself, handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have.' The body is not changed into the nature of a spirit, but it is said to be spiritual, because it is elevated to the highest degree of perfection and excellency that the body is capable of, brought as near to the angelical nature, as is consistent with the essence of a body. So the bodies of the saints shall be spiritual bodies, not changed into the nature of spirits, but they shall be purged, defecated, and cleansed from all the dross, and mud, and feculency of an earthly temper, and their senses shall be refined to heavenly, all their acts and motions shall be advanced to a spiritual perfection: there shall be none of those parts, none of those actions from which the body is denominated a natural, or an animal body: 'It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body:' there will be no need of meat, drink, or sleep. Our Lord Jesus Christ calls the raised bodies, ἰσάγγελοι, like to the angels in this respect, for in the resurrection, 'They shall neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God in heaven;' Matt. xxii. 30.

(6.) The bodies of the saints shall be like the glorious body of Christ, in respect of splendour and beauty.

He gave a glimpse of that glory to his disciples in his transfiguration; Matt. xvii. 1, 2. 'He took some of his disciples into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light;' it was glistering, saith the other evangelist; so shall the bodies of the saints be, they shall shine as the firmament and stars; Dan. xii. 3. 'They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever;' not only as the firmament and stars, but as the sun; Matt. xiii. 43. 'Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father.' The purest and most lovely complexion, the most exquisite beauty on earth, is but darkness and deformity to that which shall shine forth in the glorified bodies of the saints: they shall shine as the sun, with a brighter lustre than that of the sun, with such a splendour as shall never be clouded, never be eclipsed, never obscured. If the glory of Solomon did transport the queen of Sheba, when she saw him, so that it is said, 'there was no more spirit left within her,' 1 Kings x. 5. how ravishing will the sight of those glorious bodies be, whose splendour, whose glory shall as far exceed that of Solomon's, as the glory of the sun exceeds that of a lily? If a little converse with God put such a glory upon Moses's face, that the people were not able to behold it, their eyes were too weak; what glory will shine forth in the bodies of the saints, of those that converse with God for ever, who will see him face to face unto all eternity? 'And we all with open face,' saith the apostle, 'beholding the glory of the Lord, as in a glass, are thereby changed from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.' By this we may guess, indeed we can do little more than guess as to these things, farther than the Scripture leads us, but by this we may conjecture, how these bodies that are now so vile, should have such a glory derived upon them. The moon is of itself a dark, gross, opacous body, much like the earth, as it is now generally concluded, and capable of demonstration; but the sun darting its beams upon it, makes it a lightsome and glorious

planet; so the bodies of the saints, though vile in themselves, yet by the glory of Christ darting on them, shall be made glorious bodies.

(7.) They shall be like him in respect of glorious dignities and privileges.

It is the glorious privilege of Christ, that he sits on the right hand of God, as Mediator, in respect of his human nature: 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand. Him hath God exalted to be a prince, King of kings, and Lord of lords;' and he hath glorious regalities, ensigns of royalty, he hath a throne, and a crown, and a sceptre: 'Thy throne, O God' (it is spoken of Christ, as Mediator) 'endures for ever, the sceptre of thy kingdom, it is a right sceptre, a sceptre of righteousness.' And he shall exercise his royal power in a glorious manner, in a judiciary way, when he shall descend corporally to judge both the quick and the dead. Now the saints shall partake of these glorious privileges, or of something like them; they shall stand at the right hand of Christ: 'Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir;' Psal. xlv. 9. The bodies of the saints shall have possession of a glorious kingdom, a kingdom of glory: 'Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' And they have glorious ensigns of royalty ascribed to them. They have a crown: when the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive 'a crown of glory;' yea, the Lord himself will be their crown, as the expression is, Isa. xxviii. 5. 'In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty to the residue of his people.' How glorious will it be for them, not only to be crowned by the Lord, but to have the Lord himself to be their crown? And they shall partake with him in the glory of judging quick and dead; they shall sit with him in his throne: 'To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father on his throne.' They shall join with Christ as assessors in that glorious act of judgment; they shall not only judge the world, but the angels: 'Know ye not,' saith the apostle, 'that we shall judge angels?'

And so much for the explication of this truth.

I might improve it several ways.

Use 1. By way of inference: If the bodies of the saints shall be so glorious, what glory then will be put upon their souls? If the body, the vile body shall be advanced to such a glory, what glory will be put upon the soul, which is the prime receptacle of the image of God? If glory be the portion of the body, the soul will much more exceed in glory.

Use 2. Let us here take notice of the love of Christ, the wonderful love of Christ, that he will take notice of the bodies of his people, of that which is so vile, bodies that are vile in themselves, and much more vile as they are instruments of sin; bodies that are vile while they live, but much viler when they are dead; noisome by putrefaction, or devoured by vermin, or dissolved into dust. Will the King of glory take notice of such vile things? Can he think thoughts of love concerning objects that are so unlovely? Yes, thoughts of love indeed, to make things so vile to be glorious, glorious like himself. Was it not enough that he redeemed men from wrath, delivered them from going into the pit of destruction? Was it not enough to make their souls glorious, but will he make their bodies glorious too? Was it not enough to make their bodies like the stars, or the sun, but to make them glorious like himself? Must his own glory be the pattern of theirs? Will nothing less satisfy the love of Christ, but imparting to these vile bodies his own glory? O what manner of love is this! So dear are the saints to him, such love he hath for them, as the very vilest thing belonging to them shall partake of his own glory, shall be made glorious like himself. As Mephibosheth said to David: 'What is thy servant that thou shouldest look on such a dead dog as I am?' With much more reason may we say, and that with astonishment: What are we, O Lord, that thou shouldst look upon such vile dust, which is even trampled under the feet of the beasts, that thou shouldst advance us to such a height of honour, that thou shouldst crown us with glory, with such a glory, a glory like thine own?

Use 3. For inquiry: How shall we know whether we are of the number of those whose vile bodies shall be fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ? There are several characters in this chapter by which it may be known: I shall only name them.

(1.) Those that worship God in the spirit.

(2.) Those that rejoice in Christ Jesus.

(3.) Those whose conversation is in heaven. And,

(4.) Those that look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; you have these two last in the verse before my text, but I must not insist on them.

Use 4. This should teach us to mix our grief for the loss of deceased relatives (those that die in the Lord) with joy. Some sorrow is allowed. They are reckoned among the worst of sinners, that are ἄστοργοι, without natural affection. Stoical senselessness is inhuman, it is far from being Christian, or evangelical. We may mourn for ourselves in reference to the great advantages that we lose by those we are bereaved of, especially if they are spiritual advantages: we may mourn in reference to the places where they lived, it portends evil to those places: 'For the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.' When those that should stand in the gap are removed, there is wrath breaking in upon that people without any remedy: we may mourn in reference to ourselves, but in reference to them we have cause to rejoice. If we mourn, it should not be as those without hope. Immoderate sorrow hath its rise from self-love. Will you count him a friend who grieves at your preferment? The death of the saints is the highway to glory. The apostle calls death, a seed time, that is, a time of hope, not of mourning; and a time in reference to an expected harvest, is a time of rejoicing.

But we may mourn, we of this congregation have a particular cause to do it. I shall speak something of that excellent person that we have lost: but what I shall say, as the time will permit me, is but little concerning that great worthy. It was my unhappiness that I had so little and late acquaintance with him, which makes me not competent for such an undertaking; the account that is due to the world, requires a volume, and a better hand than mine, which I hope it will meet with in time: only let me touch some generals, which may help us to a sense of our loss, without which we are not like to make such an improvement of it, as the Lord expects from those upon whom his hand is fallen so heavy.

A great light is fallen; one of eminency for holiness, learning, parts, and abilities; a pastor, a scholar, a divine of the first magnitude; holiness gave a divine lustre to his other accomplishments, it shined in his whole course, and

was diffused through his whole conversation. I need not tell you of this that knew him, and observed that it was his great design to promote holiness in the power, life, and exercise of it among you. It was his great complaint that the power of it declined among professors. It was his care and endeavour to prevent or cure spiritual decays in his own flock. He was a burning and a shining light, and you for a while rejoiced in his light: alas! that it was but for a while, and that we cannot rejoice in it still!

Those practical discourses which he published to the world, did give a taste that his spirit and temper was under the influence and power of holiness. There are some creatures that love to bark at the light, instead of making a better use of it: he met with such, I mean some that wrote against him, who thought themselves concerned to represent him odious to the world, but with great advantage to him, because they could not do it but by groundless surmises, and false suggestions, such as shewed the authors of them malicious, and rendered them ridiculous.

He was master of all parts of learning requisite to an accomplished divine; those that understood him, and will be just, cannot deny him the reputation and honour of a great scholar; and those that detract from him in this, seem to be led by a spirit of envy, that would not suffer them willingly to see so great an ornament among those that are of another persuasion. Indeed he had parts able to master any thing he applied himself unto, though he restrained himself to those studies which might render him most serviceable to Christ, and the souls of men. He had extraordinary intellectuals, a vast memory, a quick apprehension, a clear and piercing judgment; he was a passionate lover of light and truth, of divine truth especially, he pursued it unweariedly, through painful and wasting studies, such as impaired his health and strength, such as exposed him to those distempers with which he conflicted many years: and some may blame him for this as a sort of intemperance, but it is the most excusable of any, and looks like a voluntary martyrdom. However it shewed he was ready to spend, and be spent, for Christ: he did not bury his talent, with which he was richly furnished, but still laid it out for the Lord who had intrusted him. He preached while his strength and liberty would serve, then by discourse and writing.

That he was an excellent preacher none will deny who knew him, and knew what preaching was, and think it not the worse because it is spiritual and evangelical. He had an admirable facility in discoursing on any subject, pertinently and decently, and could better express himself extempore, than others with premeditation. He was never at a loss for want of expression; a happiness few can pretend to; and this he could shew upon all occasions, in the presence of the highest persons in the nation, and from the greatest to the meanest. He hereby shewed he had the command of his learning. His vast reading and experience was hereby made useful, in resolving doubts, clearing what was obscure, advising in perplexed and intricate cases, and breaches, or healing them which sometimes seemed incurable. Not only we, but all his brethren will have reason to bewail the loss of him. His conversation was not only advantageous in respect to his pleasantness and obligingness; but there was that in it which made it desirable to great persons, natives and foreigners, and that by so many, that few could have what they desired.

I need speak nothing of his writings, though that is another head that I intimated, they commend themselves to the world. If holiness, learning, and a masculine unaffected style can commend any thing, his practical discourses cannot but find much acceptation with those who are sensible of their soul concerns, and can relish that which is divine, and value that which is not common or trivial. His excellent Comment upon the Hebrews gained him a name and esteem, not only at home, but in foreign countries. When he had finished it (and it was a merciful providence that he lived to finish it), he said, Now his work was done, it was time for him to die. There were several other discourses that seem controversial and are so: our loss of him in this respect seems to be irreparable, for any thing that is in our present prospect. The due management of controversies require so great abilities, that there is not one among a hundred of our divines, are competently qualified for that; and the truths of the gospel, which should be dearer to us than our outward concerns, are like to be suppressed or adulterated, unless the Spirit of truth stir up and empower some to assert and vindicate them. He had a singular dexterity this way, for the managing of controversies; and those truths

that he vindicated, were such as were most in danger by the apostatizing spirit of this age: some may think his genius led him much to study debates, but so far as I have observed, he did not affect to be an aggressor, but still was on the defensive, and proceeded with such temper, that he would rather oblige his adversary (if a lover of truth) than exasperate him. He made it appear he did not write so much against any man's person, as for the truth: I heard one of them declare, it would not trouble a man to be opposed in such a way as this great doctor did treat his greatest antagonist. It is usual with persons of extraordinary parts, to straggle from the common road, and affect novelty, though thereby they lose the best company; as though they could not appear eminent, unless they march alone. But this great person did not affect singularity; they were old truths that he endeavoured to defend, those that were transmitted to us by our first reformers, and owned by the best divines of the church of England. What the truth has lost by this, I cannot easily say.

But it falleth heaviest, and most directly upon this congregation; we had a light in this candlestick; which did not only enlighten the room, but gave light to others far and near; but it is put out; we did not sufficiently value it; I wish I might not say, that our sins have put it out. We had a special honour and ornament, such as other churches would much prize; but the crown is fallen from our heads: yea, may I not add, woe unto us, for we have sinned, we have lost an excellent pilot, and lost him when a fierce storm is coming upon us, when we have most need of him. I dread the consequences, considering the weakness of those that are left at the helm. If we are not sensible of it, it is because our blindness is great. Let us beg of God, that he would prevent what this threatens us with, and that he would make up this loss, or that it may be repaired, or at least that the sad consequences of it may be prevented. And let us pray in the last words of this dying person to me: 'That the Lord would double his Spirit upon us, that he would not remember against us former iniquities; but that his tender mercies may speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low.'

The following Letters were obtained too late for insertion in their proper place.

TO MR. WHITAKER.

(From the Original, kindly furnished me by Mr. Upcot, of the London Institution.)

SIR,

I RECEIVED yours by the bearer, who has done me the favour to call for an answer: and although, at present, I have scarce leisure to write a line, yet I was not willing to omit the opportunity of saluting you with one word. I am glad to hear of your welfare, and of the peace of the church with you, which I pray God to continue. I hope it is well also with you as to spiritual thrift and growth; and I earnestly desire it may be so. For indeed amongst all the tokens of God's displeasure that abound in the world, and especially in this nation, there are none so sad, as the open evidences which we have of his withdrawing his presence from his churches and other professors of the gospel, which appear in the fruits and effects of it. But I cannot at present give you my dreadful apprehensions of the present state of things in the world; I may possibly have another opportunity for it. My second part of Evangelical Churches is finished; but when it will be published, as yet I know not. It doth comprise, not only that which you want, but all the cases wherein the practice of our way is concerned. I pray excuse my haste, and remember in your prayers him who is labouring with age, infirmities, temptations, and troubles, being

Your affectionate brother in our dearest Lord,

J. OWEN.

London, Oct. 29.

For my worthy Friend, Mr. Thomas Whitaker, at Leeds.

TO HENRY CROMWELL,

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

(In answer to some requests for the improvement of the University of Dublin.)

MY LORD,

I RECEIVED your commands by Mr. Wood, in reference unto the statutes of this University, to be sent unto you. I shall,

with the first convenient opportunity, endeavour to send or bring them unto your Lordship. I am glad to hear of your endeavour to dispose of that University to the interests of piety and learning; and am bold to inform your Lordship, that our statutes, as those also of the other University, being framed to the spirit and road [qu. mode] of studies in former days, will scarcely, upon consideration, be found to be the best expedients for the promotion of the good ends of godliness and solid literature, which are in your aim. I could much rather wish that if the great employments of your Lordship's servants in that place will not afford them leisure to attend such a work, that you would be pleased to send your commands to some of your friends and servants in Oxford, men of abilities, wisdom, and piety, to compose a body of orders and statutes suited to the present light, interest, and discoveries of literature, in the ways and expedients of it which we do enjoy, that may be submitted to your Lordship's judgment. It is not impossible that something not unworthy your owning might be presented unto you; and that returning with the advantage of your allowance and approbation it might get esteem here also, where beaten road, customs, and, in many, an affection to an old interest, will not easily permit the most evidently useful sort of alteration to take place.

I hope your Lordship will pardon this boldness in him who prays for you daily, and is,

My Lord,

Your most humble and most faithful Servant.

JOHN OWEN.

Ox. Ch. Ch. Coll. Sept. 9, 1657.

[Directed]

For his Excellency the Lord Henry Cromwell,—These.

[Endorsed]

Dr. Jo. Owen, Oxford,
Concerning the sending the Statutes of Oxford.

[Lansdown MSS. in British Museum, 823. 347. Orig.]

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